



NAVY NEWS

AUGUST 2015

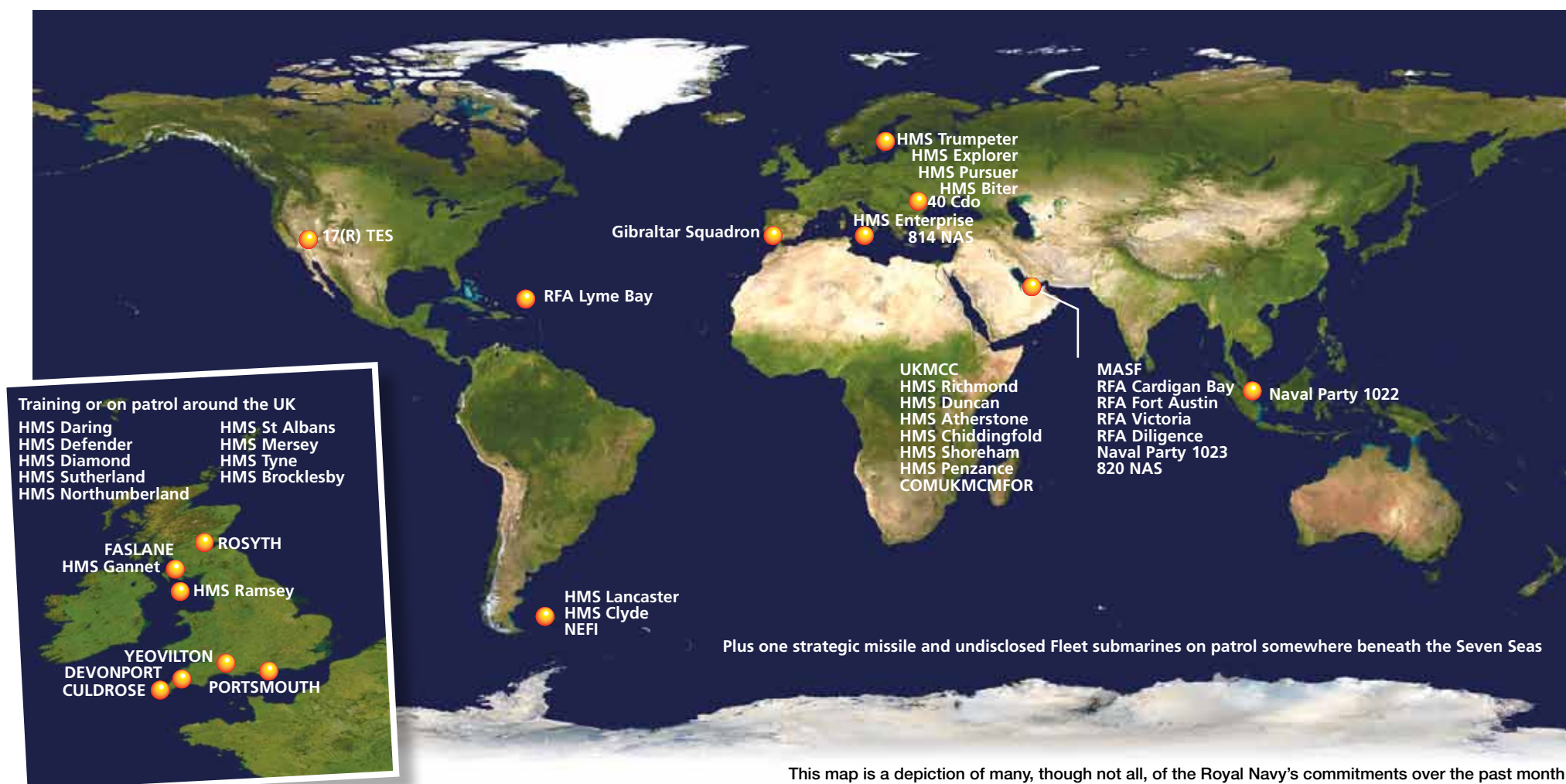


THE LAST SURVIVOR

HMS M33, the sole remaining British veteran of Gallipoli, is ready to tell her story of the bloody WW1 campaign. The monitor – complete with WW1 6in guns – has undergone £2.4m of conservation work in No.1 dock at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. See page 17.

Picture: Gary Davies, Marine Photographic, courtesy The National Museum of the Royal Navy





This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

WE ARE well into the summer holiday season and many of you will be looking forward to escaping to foreign climes. And it is abroad we look as Royal Navy vessels notch up numerous countries visited during their deployments.

Topping the globetrotting charts is **HMS Severn**, which has returned from an eight-month Caribbean deployment (see page 5). While away, she visited 29 ports in 20 countries and islands.

Meanwhile, **HMS Pursuer**, **Biter**, **Explorer** and **Trumpeter**, visited a number of countries as part of their two-month University Royal Navy Units' summer deployment (see pages 14-15). They called in at Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany before striking out into the heart of the Baltic. As well as Riga, Ventspils and Liepaja (twice), the boats have called in at Pärnu, Kihnu, and Kuressaare in the Gulf of Riga and the island of Naissaar.

Elsewhere it has been business as usual for the Royal Navy, with **HMS Duncan** playing her part in the USS Theodore Roosevelt battle group launching strikes against ISIL in the Gulf (see page 3).

Also in the region is **HMS Atherstone**, which called into Dubai so her divers could assist port authorities in clearing potentially hazardous debris from the seabed (see page 6).

Back home to Devonport from her extended deployment was **HMS Bulwark**, (see pages 4 and 5), which returned along with some personnel from **814 NAS** from the international search and rescue mission in the central Mediterranean.

Remaining in the West Country and **HMS Defender** has been working with RAF Typhoons (see page 7), helping II (AC) Squadron hone their air-maritime skills.

Also honing their skills, this time the art of extracting comrades stuck behind enemy lines, was the **Commando Helicopter Force** as it took part in Exercise Forlorn Hope (see right).

Bulgaria was the destination for **40 Commando** (see page 9) as they joined NATO allies for Exercise Platinum Lion, while Marines from **45 Commando** shattered the peace of rural Pembrokeshire – as did some elements of **40 Commando** – as they tested their heavy weapons skills (see page 19).

More than 30,000 spectators flocked to **RNAS Yeovilton** for the station's air day, which featured historic aircraft as well as CHF's new Merlin Mk3 and Wildcat (see page 21).

We also go inside the nerve centre of the **Fleet Air Arm's** biggest base (see centre pages) as personnel in the Tower at Yeovilton show what their work involves.

The future Navy features strongly this month, with **HMS Queen Elizabeth** leading the way as one of her 200-tonne Wärtsilä diesel generators flashed up (see page 6). The aircraft which will fly from her, the **F-35B**, achieved a major milestone in the USA as one was launched using a ski jump ramp at Pax River (see page 6).

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas spoke about HMS Queen Elizabeth as he outlined the opportunities for the Royal Navy during his Chatham House speech (see page 25). Working with partner nations was one of the themes of his speech, and two Royal Navy officers currently on exchange with the French Navy took part in Bastille Day commemorations (see page 11). **HMS Ocean** also hosted a number of French sailors for Exercise Griffin Rise (see page 11).

In other commemorations, this month marks the centenary of **HMS M33** taking part in the Suvla Bay landings. The Gallipoli ship has been preserved and opens to the public in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard (see page 1 and page 17).

The deeds of arguably Britain's greatest WW1 submariner – Lt Cdr Martin Nasmith – were remembered as the latest Victoria Cross stone was installed as part of the Great War centenary commemorations (see page 24).

Delivering hope to stranded comrades

HOW would you save the crew of a helicopter crashed far behind enemy lines?

That was the question posed – and answered – by an action-packed two-day exercise run by the wings of the Royal Marines on Dartmoor.

More than half a dozen helicopters from the Fleet Air Arm, RAF and Army Air Corps, plus ground crews, commandos and 'enemy' troops, converged on the forbidding terrain outside Okehampton to practise the art of extracting comrades by helicopter under enemy fire – 'Joint Personnel Recovery' in modern-day military jargon.

The commandos' new battle wagon – the big green Merlin Mk3 which is taking over from the veteran Sea King – was the star of the show, being chosen for the rescue mission, but they weren't alone in the Devon skies.

For before the rescuers could fly in, reconnaissance sorties had to be carried out to scout for the enemy.

Surveillance 'bagger' Sea Kings tracked the movements of opposing forces – exactly as they did in Iraq and Afghanistan – while new Wildcat helicopters carried out sweeps of the pick-up area on Okehampton range, quickly identifying enemy troops closing in on the downed aircrew.

That prompted Forward Air Controllers from 847 NAS to direct Army Air Corps' Apaches to carry out simulated air strikes (a job performed by Prince Harry in Afghanistan) before the 'recovery package' – Merlins escorted by Wildcat – flew in to collect the stranded personnel.

The Merlins flew in a protective force of Royal Marines from 42 Commando who found themselves engaged by the enemy (played by personnel from the Commando Helicopter Force) who were wiped out by

a combination of green beret fighting spirit and aerial firepower.

It's the second year running CHF, based at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset, has run Exercise Forlorn Hope – named after a group of soldiers dispatched or left behind on what we'd today term a suicide mission.

"It's a big call to place more people in harm's way to recover others which is why Joint Personnel Recovery involves a healthy degree of risk management," explained Lt Col Derek Stafford, 846 NAS's Commanding Officer.

"The reason behind exercises such as Forlorn Hope is that commanders have a capability at their disposal to do so if required so our fighting men and women can do their jobs with one fewer concern.

"Should it go wrong, there's somebody there to get them back to safety – reassuring for the families too."



Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill, CHF



● NA(AH) Karl Belding carrying out bridge duty in HMS Duncan



● From top left: Inside the Ops Room aboard HMS Duncan; AET Ross Wason carries out some maintenance; The view of USS Theodore Roosevelt from HMS Duncan's Lynx; Mne Josh Radford during a training exercise
Pictures: L(Phot) Nicky Wilson

Mighty task looking out for the Big Stick

LITTLE and large power through the mist of the Gulf – carrying out a massive task in the fight against ISIL.

At 8,500 tonnes, HMS Duncan is dwarfed by the USS Theodore Roosevelt – but the American behemoth relies on Britain's most advanced warship for safety.

The Type 45 is working around the clock to support day and night strikes against ISIL led by the Big Stick.

Duncan, the Royal Navy's sixth and last Daring-class destroyer, is responsible for shielding the 100,000-tonne flat-top from any foe by sea or air – the Type 45's Sea Viper missiles can take out the latter at up to 75 miles away.

But more important for the ongoing mission in the Gulf – known as Operation Shader to the Brits, Operation Inherent Resolve to the Americans – is Duncan's ability to provide air traffic and fighter control for the F-18 Super Hornet's flying from the Roosevelt's deck.

The former keeps the aircraft apart, the latter guide bombers on to their targets.

In addition, Duncan was also asked to act as 'plane guard' – sailing relatively close to the carrier, with her sea boats at the ready to launch in case an aircraft landing or taking off is forced to ditch.

She is the latest Royal Navy destroyer to take her place with a US carrier battle group – the most powerful naval formation on the Seven Seas – engaged in operations

in the Gulf region.

"This deployment has been the highlight of my 24 years in the Royal Navy – and I know my sailors and Royal Marines are proud of all we have achieved so far," said Cdr Rich Atkinson, HMS Duncan's Commanding Officer.

"Duncan's cutting-edge capabilities make her the natural choice to escort the Theodore Roosevelt and provide the umbrella of protection she requires to carry out uninterrupted air strikes in the fight against ISIL."

The destroyer is on her first tour of duty – as is electronic warfare specialist AB Ash Stroud.

"We're very much a full part of the carrier strike group – we're often the primary escort which shows that the US Navy trusts us to protect one of their most powerful warships," he said.

"Whilst nine months away from home is a long time, I'm really proud to be contributing to a really worthwhile mission."

As well as supporting the international effort against the fundamentalists – an effort now involving more than 60 nations – HMS Duncan has also joined the wider security mission in the region: patrolling the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden (aka 'Pirate Alley'), the Gulf of Oman and accompanying shipping through the key choke points in the region such as the

Strait of Hormuz and the Bab al Mandeb.

"I've been with HMS Duncan since she was built on the Clyde and it's great to see her now, three years on, showing her flexibility as a deployed Royal Navy warship," said Officer of the Watch Lt Samuel Velickovic, who works on the destroyer's bridge.

"Not only are we a visible sign of Britain's commitment to the region, we're also demonstrating how advanced the Type 45 destroyer is in providing air defence as well as a range of other missions."

"I'm proud to be part of HMS Duncan – the best Type 45 there is."

Duncan replaced her sister ship Dauntless, which was guarding the USS Carl Vinson.

Ahead of her duties in the Middle East, the Roosevelt moored off Stokes Bay during a visit to Portsmouth, from which she and Duncan left for the Gulf in March.

The destroyer will be on patrol east of Suez until the end of 2015.



MISSION: ACCOMPLISHED



SURROUNDED by a cluster of landing craft which were at the heart of her two-month-long lifesaving mission – and a small flotilla of tugs to help her alongside – lifesaver HMS Bulwark returns to Plymouth.

Nearly 5,000 people owe their lives – and their futures – to the sailors, airmen, medics and Royal Marines aboard the assault ship, which found herself thrust into an unexpected and demanding mercy mission in the Mediterranean.

Instead of carrying out amphibious exercises, Bulwark found herself leading Operation Weald – Britain's response to the crisis of migrants fleeing Africa in unsafe vessels.

Around 1,000 friends and family members cheered Bulwark into her home base, while a Merlin Mk2 of 814 Naval Air Squadron (more about them shortly) flew overhead in salute.

On the jetty the Band of the Grenadier Guards provided a rousing accompaniment while the crowd waved welcome.

Master-at-Arms Paul Benton-Strike of Torpoint was met by his wife Wendy and three-year-old son William as he stepped off the assault ship.

"It's been very difficult without Paul. But I'm so happy he's back. William's been missing him a lot, but doesn't always understand what is happening. His dad goes and then comes back! They'll be playing a lot of trains and soldiers. It will be great."

Marine engineer LET Alan

Jenkins was met by his emotional girlfriend Rebecca, from Plymouth and his two children Joshua, just 11 months, and Matthew, aged three.

Rebecca said: "It feels he's been away for a long time even though it's only for a few months. I'm used to him being away, but it never really gets any better when it happens. I get very emotional at these times."

"I'm lucky that my mum and dad help a lot with two young children when he's away. I'm looking forward to our summer holiday – it's not far away, just a caravan in Bude. But Matthew's really looking forward to playing football with his dad."

The ship was only expecting to be away a few weeks when she sailed on April 7 to lead the UK's contribution to the Gallipoli centenary commemorations in Turkey.

No sooner were those over than the prime minister committed Bulwark to a SAR mission in reaction to the tragic loss of life unfolding in the Mediterranean.

With three Merlin helicopters from 814 NAS acting as her 'eyes in the sky' and a detachment of Royal Marines from 45 Commando in Arbroath, Bulwark rescued 4,747 people – that's more than half the population of Torpoint – from a variety of boats large and small.

In the biggest single day of rescues on Operation Weald, the ship picked up around 1,300 souls in the waters between Libya and Sicily using her landing craft as rescue craft.

"At the outset of Operation Weald our mantra was 'to save lives and lessen suffering' and that's precisely what we've done," said the assault ship's CO Capt Nick Cooke-Priest.

"With our international partners we've rescued thousands of desperate people who would have perished at sea had we not responded."

"None of these achievements would have been possible without the stalwart support of our families and friends, some of whom we are privileged to have here with us today, and for this I express my sincerest gratitude."

"Our homecoming is all the more poignant given our delayed return and I know that everyone onboard is hugely looking forward to – and thoroughly deserving of – some well-earned summer leave."

As are the bulk of the fliers of 814 NAS who returned to Culdrose at the same time as Bulwark came back.

For 60 days from first to last light, its Merlins headed out from Sicily or from the flight deck of HMS Bulwark to look for people in distress aboard unsafe boats off the coast of Libya.

With the international mission in the Mediterranean switching focus to stopping the smuggling/people trafficking, two of the three helicopters flew home, to prepare for Cougar, the Royal Navy's annual key amphibious exercise which begins next month.

The three helicopters clocked up 310 hours – just short of 13

days – carrying out 140 patrols on Operation Weald.

"It's extremely rewarding and humbling to think that all our efforts have been converted into saving lives at sea," said 814's CO Cdr Stu Finn.

"There's been a real sense of purpose and value to what we have done. It's been a real mission with real, tangible results."

The helicopters' four-strong crew – two pilots, one observer and one aircrewman – scoured 400,000 square miles of the Mediterranean, a demanding task made easier by the Merlins' state-of-the-art radar.

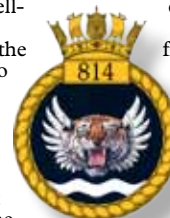
"It's designed to spot a submarine's periscope appearing for a matter of seconds, so locating a migrants' boat, however small, wasn't too difficult," Cdr Finn explained.

"We could separate them from ordinary merchant traffic because they were small and heading north from Africa very slowly – we'd fly in to inspect them visually, then inform Bulwark to co-ordinate the physical rescue."

No one was directly rescued by the Merlins themselves – there were at least 100 migrants in each vessel encountered and the helicopters could carry no more than a dozen survivors.

They were called on to fly one pregnant survivor from Bulwark to hospital in Malta when her waters broke (she gave birth to a son a few hours later).

The helicopters used the Italian air base at Sigonella, just outside Catania in Sicily, as their



pictures: la(photos) caroline davies and ben shread

LISHED

4,747 

migrants rescued

 15,000

pairs of disposable gloves used

7,300 

bottles of water handed out

 x 4 area searched by 814 NAS

310  hours flown by Merlins

140  patrols flown

9 

suspected smugglers arrested

 16,967

extra meals served

 4,000 blankets issued

7,000 

disposable masks used

main base, but spent most of their time either in the air or on the flight deck of HMS Bulwark, where teams of engineers carried out daily maintenance to allow the mission to continue.

Temperatures on the ground in Sicily were between 35° and 40°C which meant engineers – who, like the rest of the squadron had only just returned from operations in the Middle East when they were sent to the Med – were working in extremely challenging conditions, while it was only slightly cooler at sea aboard Bulwark.

For the fliers, sorties over the Mediterranean were long – but something they were used to.

“We’re Naval aviators. We love operating aircraft at sea. It’s what we joined up for,” says Cdr Finn.

“To the unfamiliar eye, it may have looked quite daunting and monotonous staring at these expanses of blue, but for the observer and aircrewman staring at the radar picture it was very different.

“Thanks to the radar and information provided by other ships, we could identify the smallest migrant boats relatively quickly. On the busiest sortie, we encountered five vessels in a little over 30 minutes.”

One Merlin Mk2 remains in the Mediterranean, with around two dozen air and ground crew flying/looking after it, conducting sorties working with HMS Enterprise and the ships of EUNAVFOR on the ongoing mission.

■ Artist captures migrant mission on canvas, page 13; and reservist linguist’s vital role on Bulwark, page 27



Severn in heaven

LOOK into my eyes, look into my eyes...

A delighted AB Ryan Partington is reunited with his three-year-old son Harry after eight months apart as HMS Severn returned to Portsmouth from a unique Caribbean deployment.

It’s the first time the ship, normally used to police fishing stocks and act as the RN’s eyes and ears in home waters, has ventured so far from home.

So she made the most of it.

Twenty different countries. Five British overseas territories. Twenty-nine port visits. Thirty thousand miles on the odometer.

“It’s been a fantastic deployment – I’ve visited more places over the last eight months than I have in my seven-year Navy career, done a multi-national exercise and helped local communities all over the Caribbean,” said 25-year-old Ryan from Lancashire.

“But now I’m looking forward to spending time with my son and my parents.”

The River-class ship was dispatched west in November to fly the flag and reassure Britons in the Turks and Caicos, Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Anguilla and Grand Cayman.

The 48-strong ship’s company shared their experience with the region’s fisheries enforcement agencies, worked with the Red Cross, her surgeon and medical team offered medical training, and the crew painted children’s homes, took part in sporting competitions and disaster-relief exercises.

The ship embarked Barbadian and Belizean Coast Guard Officers and developed working relationships with the US and Bahamian Coast Guards as well as the navies of the Dominican Republic, France (in Martinique) and Netherlands (Aruba).

Because Severn normally hops in and out of UK ports every fortnight or so, she’s never (as far as we know) enjoyed a traditional-style Royal Navy homecoming before.

“We’ve thoroughly enjoyed meeting the challenges of this unique tasking and having the opportunity to represent the UK in the Caribbean,” said Severn’s CO Lt Cdr Steven Banfield.

“Our thanks must go to our families who we look forward to seeing with great anticipation at our homecoming. Without their support we would not be able to do the job we love and would not have achieved as much as we have done in the past eight months.”

Picture: LA(Phot) Luron Wright

Bottom inspectors



FRIENDS of the UK’s ‘capital ship’ admire a view of her from the bottom of Dry Dock No.15 in Portsmouth as members of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers spent a day with HMS Westminster.

The Type 23 is into the second half of a 14-month revamp in her home base, due to complete her upgrade at the end of 2015 ready to rejoin the front-line Fleet.

The last time the Worshipful Company visited the frigate she was in pristine condition for a trip up the Thames shortly before she began her overhaul.

Now much of her is hidden behind a forest of scaffolding and canvas as an army of engineers from BAE and ship’s company toil to bring her back to life.

Global work recognised

FIVE RN personnel received the Queen’s Commendation for Valuable Service for their work around the globe.

Cpl David O’Connor of 42 Commando was recognised for his actions as Force Protection Section Commander on Op Gritrock – the fight against Ebola off Sierra Leone.

Promoted to acting sergeant, he led a team of four to establish the District Ebola Response Centre in Makeni, galvanising locals and working well above his rank.

“I was honoured and surprised to hear that I was going to be recognised in this way,” he said. “You never expect to be given special recognition above the other men you work beside on operations, who all do great work. My mother was very proud of me when I told her.”

Capt Julie Thain-Smith of the Queen Alexandra’s Royal Naval Nursing Service received the same award for her 11-month deployment to Afghanistan.

She worked in Kabul and was the first nurse to take up the role of Chief Medical Advisor to the Commander International Security and Assistance Force.

Capt Anthony Rimington was recognised for his role as Staff Officer Future Operations at UKMCC in Bahrain where he spent nine months. A demanding post, his watch spanned a period of huge strategic changes including the end of Operation Herrick and the surge of counter-ISIL operations in Iraq.

Lt Col Kian Murphy was awarded the QCVS for his role as Chief of Operations in the European Union Task Force, while Cdr Des Donworth was honoured for his work as the Senior Maritime Advisor to the Libyan Navy and to Commander Defence Advisory Training team.

Iron Duke passes tests

A TEAM from the Maritime Commissioning, Trials and Assessment organisation joined HMS Iron Duke off the South Coast to check the performance of onboard equipment.

The week was divided into slots for the marine engineers to test the propulsion, power generation and auxiliary machinery while weapon engineers checked sensors, weapons and communication systems.

“It was really satisfying to test and push the equipment that we maintain, even better to know at the end of it that the hard work conducted during our regular maintenance ensured the ship remains on top form,” said LET(ME) Adam ‘Paris’ Hilton who took part in the tests.



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Back in the clan

A PLATOON of junior ratings from HMS Sutherland marches on to a makeshift parade ground as the Scottish frigate is welcomed back into the RN 'clan'.

The 18-year-old Type 23 was re-dedicated in her native Devonport in front of friends and family, formally marking her rebirth following a massive refit.

They were joined by many of the engineers who toiled to revamp the Fighting Clan, plus affiliates from the frigate's namesake Scottish county and Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Capability) Rear Admiral James Morse, one of the ship's previous commanding officers, who said both the frigate and her sailors looked magnificent.

Today's CO Cdr Stephen Anderson said his ship should have been reaching the end of her active life by this stage in her career – but had been given fresh impetus.

"Sutherland was launched officially just over 18 years ago with a design life of 18 years," he said.

"We find ourselves at the end of our design life and with the two-year package we have just gone through will see her regenerate for another 18 years.

"This is very special because it is a rededication to take us forward back into the fleet, and another 18 years' service to look forward to."

Alongside formal proceedings, there was plenty of entertainment for the ship's company's children – from a balloon artist and kids' entertainer to Ryan the Lion, Sutherland's unofficial mascot (he takes his inspiration from the ship's badge), while parents took home 'mini Ryans' in an initiative to help make separation from their offspring a bit easier.

Picture: LA(Phot) Ben Shread, FRPU West

Ruler's rule ends

OPERATIONS involving dozens of ships from the world's navies committed to the fight against ISIL, piracy and drug-trafficking in the Indian Ocean and helping migrants in the Mediterranean have been sustained by British tanker RFA Wave Ruler which is back in UK waters after 18 months away.

The 31,500-tonne support vessel and her crew of just under 100 men and women has performed 115 refuelling operations, almost all of them in the Middle East, and mostly with American vessels.

In all, the tanks of the Ruler have pumped out 52,000 cubic metres of diesel fuel to power shipping – that's enough to fill nearly 21 Olympic-sized swimming pools – while visiting helicopters took 1,000 cubic metres of their AVCAT fuel (enough to fill the tanks of more than 18,000 Ford Focuses to the brim).

Cadet Huw Lewis said at times it felt as if the tanker had been supporting "the who's who of Nato" with a succession of vessels lining up to take fuel on board: British destroyers such as HMS Dauntless, Defender and Duncan, France's FS Jean de Vienne and Spain's ESPS

Infanta Cristina, plus other nations committed to the security mission, like Pakistan, whose Navy still operates former Royal Navy warships.

Some of Wave Ruler's crew had sailed on Type 21 frigates when serving in the RN – while other veteran members of the ship's company were old enough to remember refuelling the class back in the 1980s and early 90s.

"The Americans were the main customers with some of their ships coming back repeatedly for more fuel – so much so that a loyalty card could have been expected," said Huw.

"Wave Ruler should be given the title of 'diplomatic relations' vessel as most refuelling operations finished with a real buzz of accomplishment and good feeling on both sides.

"It was always good fun conducting serials with our own Navy and seeing the White Ensign flown – Type 45 destroyers still impress. Expectations are naturally high when working with your own – and the job was always done right."

Refuelling duties in the Middle East are now being performed by RFA Fort Victoria (the ship Wave Ruler relieved back at the end of 2013).

Different diving in Dubai

DIVERS from HMS Atherstone helped to make the port of the Middle East metropolis of Dubai safer when they assisted recovering sunken objects from the harbour.

More used to plunging into the waters of the Gulf to deal with real and practice mines, the nine-strong team of clearance divers jumped at the chance to help harbour authorities.

The port has about one ninth of the capacity of the much larger Jebel Ali just down the coast, but remains the principal port for visiting cruise liners, is the home to the QE2 while her fate is determined, and accommodates merchantmen as they load and offload goods, plus visiting RN warships.

In clearing almost 800 metres of jetty, the team found and assisted in the removal of seven fenders – giant bumpers to stop ships bashing against quay walls – each one weighing 4.5 tonnes.

"Clearing hazards from dockyards might not exactly be the focus of our training," said AB(D) Thomas Oliver, the youngest member of the Crazy A's dive team, "but our frequent and varied diving exercises enable us to adapt our skills to meet any underwater challenge that you can throw at us."

His CO Lt Cdr John Cromie added: "Aside from the fact that the Royal Navy has an interest in maintaining the availability of these berths, it's vital that ships of all types can be assured of their safety in the key ports of the world."



Pictures: Andy Wolfe, Lockheed Martin



F-35's up, up and away

THIS is the moment years of complex calculations, computer simulations, planning, training and testing pays off for the Navy's jet of tomorrow.

This is the first launch of the F-35B Lightning II using a ski ramp – exactly as it will do when launched from the flight deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

Naval reservist and BAE Systems test pilot Peter 'Wizzer' Wilson guided his state-of-the-art strike fighter BF-04 down the runway at the US Navy's Pax River air base, about 45 miles from the American capital, where the ramp has been built to pave the way for Royal Navy carrier operations.

"It's always exciting when you get to do something in aviation for the first time," said Peter.

"We spend literally years planning these 'firsts', with hundreds of hours in the

simulator as the event gets close, but even with all the preparation the test team remains focussed on the potential that something unexpected might happen. As is usually the case, the jet performed as expected and it was a real pleasure.

"I can't wait until we're conducting F-35 ski jumps from the deck of the Queen Elizabeth carrier."

Ski jumps were fitted to the RN's generation of Harrier carriers to give the jets more lift with less speed than a conventional flat flight deck.

The concept has been retained with the Queen Elizabeth class – although the replica ramp has been built in Maryland, not Yeovilton.

On the new carriers the structure rises about six metres (20ft) above the normal deck.

Two weeks of initial trials were carried out

with the data gathered fed back by the test team to engineers and designers, including those at Warton in Lancashire where F-35 simulators help pilots 'fly' from the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth – before they do it for real from 2018 onwards.

Also at Pax River, the bomb which will be the mainstay of the Lightning II's strike missions was successfully dropped by the stealth fighter for the first time.

RAF test pilot Sqn Ldr Andy Edgell released two Paveway IV laser-guided bombs – 500lb of combat-proven firepower used in action by Harriers and Tornados – on to targets at the vast Atlantic Test Ranges on the US Eastern Seaboard.

The dropping of the Paveway IV – Britain's weapon of choice when it comes to laser-guided bombing – is the first of series of UK ordnance tests involving the strike fighter lined up for this year.



WHAT a magnificent view of five marvels of British engineering captured in a single image (courtesy of PO(Phot) Owen Cooban).

In the background, the iconic Forth Bridge.

Then the old Forth road crossing.

Next to it the replacement road bridge, the Queensferry Crossing, due to take its first traffic next year.

And in the foreground, on the left, under the giant blue structure of the Goliath crane, the forward, midship and forward island sections of HMS Prince of Wales.

And a few metres away, in Rosyth's main basin (nearly three million cubic metres of water – enough to fill more than 1,100 Olympic-sized swimming pools), a hive of activity beneath scaffolding and canvas, is her older sister HMS Queen Elizabeth.

In this image her funnels are not belching smoke, but they were a couple of days earlier (*see above right*) as her heart beat for the first time.

Producing this smoke – and 11 megawatts of power (almost enough to meet the needs of Dunfermline just up the road) – was one of her 200-tonne Wärtsilä diesel generators flashed up.



It took one week and 18 road tankers to deliver the 500 cubic metres – or 'cubes' in 'tanky speak' – of diesel oil required for the engine trial (the first time black gold has been pumped into the QE tanks).

And engineers stripped down the diesels for an inspection prior to the switch on – the Wärtsilä have been sitting idly in the bowels of the carrier for a couple of years so they needed a thorough look-over before anyone fired them up.

"It's been a hard struggle to get this far but we are now

starting to breathe new life into the ship's propulsion system – a wonderful achievement," said WO1 Ian Howe, the ship's power and propulsion deputy commissioning manager.

"It's only been possible due to the great working relationship forged by the Royal Navy, Aircraft Carrier Alliance, Wärtsilä and General Electric, all working together to achieve a common goal – which is to get this mighty floating 'power station', which is effectively what we are, to sea next year."

There are four Wärtsilä

diesels aboard the 65,000-tonne leviathan, collectively producing around 44MW – sufficient to power 78,000 homes – which on a day-to-day basis would drive QE along at her normal cruising speed.

To reach her top speed in excess of 25 knots (29mph), the Queen will switch to her two Rolls-Royce MT30 gas turbines.

For now the sight – and sound – of the Wärtsilä's running is impressive enough. Each diesel generator weighs the equivalent of about 150 Ford Focuses. The noise produced is about 95 decibels – similar to standing next to a loud motorbike or near a chainsaw.

Any exhaust fumes they produce are funnelled up three tubes which are up to 2.6 metres (8ft 6in) in diameter, before being expelled into the atmosphere at the top of the forward island.

"There is something particularly special about the starting of the first diesel engine on any vessel," said Jim Bennett, power and propulsion director for the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, which is overseeing construction of the two vessels.

"The gentle vibration, reassuring hum and first smoke appearing from the funnel, creates a heartbeat and breathes life into a new ship. This is a great moment for the project and the Royal Navy."

Destroyer puts air defence regiment through its paces Getting an OO with Typhoo(n)

AS IN "ooh, they're really loud."

The Royal Navy Type 45 destroyer HMS Defender teamed up with six Eurofighter Typhoons from the RAF's II (AC) Squadron to hone their air-maritime skills.

Under the watchful eye of the Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) organisation, HMS Defender and II (AC) Sqn also put the Army's 16 Air Defence regiment through their paces in a series of exercises off the South Coast, where they had to defend the UK's shores.

"Working in partnership with the RAF and Army allows FOST to maintain the world-class sea training that is globally recognised," said Capt David Dominy, Captain South to FOST.

Royal Navy fighter controllers on board the warship directed the Typhoon jets, giving the two Services the opportunity to test how they would work together on live operations.

"As the RN and RAF look ahead to the entry into service of the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carrier and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, it is important that we at FOST train partnership working at every level," said Lt Matt Bray, Staff Warfare Officer (Fighter Control) to FOST.

"By making the most of every opportunity for Royal Navy fighter controllers to work with technologically-advanced jets at

sea we ensure that ship's teams have the necessary experience to achieve success on operations around the world."

While not in the air the Typhoons have been based at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose – the other end of the country from their home at RAF Lossiemouth.

"This part of Cornwall is a really great part of the country to come to and exercise in," said Wg Cdr Roger Elliot, CO of II (AC) Sqn.

"There are great training resources, not only do you have the variety of aircraft which are based down here at RNAS Culdrose which we can use to train against, particularly the Royal Navy Hawks, but also the South Coast exercise areas where we can work with the ships."

"It's not often we get a Type 45 up into the northern reaches of Scotland, so to come here and exercise with them is great."

Culdrose's CO Capt Ade Orchard said: "RNAS Culdrose is really excited to have the Typhoons down. This is a big part of our future."

"The Typhoons will help us think about how we are going to operate with the F-35B and HMS Queen Elizabeth."

"Culdrose has got an exciting

future and we are realising now that the sooner we get involved with aircraft like Typhoon, working alongside our own aircraft, Sea King, Merlin Mk 2 and our own Hawks, alongside ships off the South Coast, the sooner we get to grips with the development of our carrier capability."

It was II (AC) Sqn's largest deployment away from their Scottish home since they re-roled with the Eurofighter Typhoon in January this year.

It is the oldest fixed-wing formation in the world, tracing its history back to 1912. It's been in action over the slag heaps of Mons and the sands of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The squadron is the fifth front-line Typhoon squadron and contributes to the Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) mission of RAF Lossiemouth, which maintains a high state of readiness 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in the defence of UK airspace.

Typhoon is a single-seat fighter that can operate up to a maximum height of 55,000 feet, with a top speed of up to Mach 1.8.

Portsmouth-based Defender is the fifth in class of the Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyers. She is equipped with Sea Viper missiles and Phalanx.



Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies

Sting Ray away ...

THIS is the Navy's principal weapon in the fight against submarines leaving its rack on the Fleet Air Arm's newest helicopter for the first time.

A Wildcat of 825 NAS spent two days over Falmouth Bay practising torpedo attacks, culminating in the launch of a dummy weapon.

In various forms, Sting Ray has been in service with the Royal Navy for more than 30 years.

It's carried by frigates (thrust out of launchers by high-pressure air) and Fleet Air Arm Merlin and Lynx helicopters (the former carry four torpedoes, the latter two); Royal Navy submarines kill their underwater prey with the much heavier Spearfish.

The Lynx's successor Wildcat is beginning to enter front-line service – the first is currently on deployment with HMS Lancaster in the Atlantic – and although it has undergone extensive trials and testing over the past five years, until now it's not dropped a torpedo.

That was put right on the range off the Lizard Peninsula – brought back into use by the



● A Wildcat from 825 NAS launches a Sting Ray

Picture: LA(Phot) Ioan Roberts

Navy for torpedo tests only last year after a 15-year hiatus.

Normally, Sting Ray is packed with a 100lb explosive charge, racing through the water at speeds in excess of 50mph as it closes in for the kill.

For the dummy runs and firing off Falmouth, a TVT (Training Variant Torpedo – 100lb of concrete replaces the

high explosive) was loaded aboard Wildcat ZZ378 at RNAS Culdrose in nearby Helston.

As with a live Sting Ray, a parachute slows the weapon's entry into the water but the torpedo is set to float when it has completed its run.

It is then recovered by SERCO using boats working out of Falmouth.

... home for HMS Quorn

PORTSMOUTH-BASED HMS Quorn returned home after nearly three months deployed on mine-clearance operations in the Baltic Sea.

The Hunt-class minehunter was part of Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group One (SNMCMG1); a taskforce of seven NATO ships assigned to the region to conduct training exercises and clear historic minefields to keep the sea lanes safe for shipping.

The ship conducted periods of navigation and seamanship training in the southern Baltic, engaged in live mine disposal in the approaches to Estonia and took part in one of the largest military exercises in the world – Baltops 15.

A particular highlight was the period of live operations off the coast of Estonia.

The annual event saw Quorn acting as part of an 11 nation mine-hunting group to clear the Baltic

Sea of the mines and explosives left following two world wars.

It gave the ship's crew a rare chance to hunt for and remove live ordnance which poses a real danger to shipping today.

AB(W) Ryan Smout, said: "I've been in the Navy for six years and although we train hard for it, this was my first time hunting for real historic mines, it definitely focuses your mind when you are staring into the sonar screen."

After Baltops, Quorn sailed in company with HMS Iron Duke and Ocean to support Kiel Week, the world's largest sailing event attracting more than three million visitors a year.

HMS Quorn is one of eight Hunt-class minehunters which form the Second Mine Countermeasures Squadron. She has a crew of 44 which includes seven officers and 37 ratings.

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Marines head to Balkans for NATO exercise

In the lion of fire

BULGARIA. A Balkan nation which encompasses the Black Sea, has rivers, including the Danube, and mountains.

Birthplace of the Cyrillic alphabet (towards the end of the 9th Century AD). Greek, Slavic, Ottoman, and Persian influences.

A cultural melting pot. Nothing like Taunton.

But Royal Marines from the West Country quickly made themselves at home as they headed east for a NATO exercise.

Men from 40 Commando found themselves in the Novo Selo Training Area in the east of the country for Platinum Lion 15-3.

The exercise saw them work alongside their US colleagues from 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Black Sea Rotational Force, Albanians (taking part in their first Platinum Lion), Bulgarians and Romanians.

At the 55.6 square-mile site they worked on cordon-and-search operations, intelligence gathering and live-firing, as well as tactical manoeuvres all designed to strengthen the partnership between NATO nations.

"Seeing how the US Marines operate

their fire-support systems was interesting, as well as the different weapons systems used, rates of fire and the means of implementing them; it was great to work through," said Lt Thomas Barry of 40 Cdo.

"The US Marine Corps led this exercise, but I look forward to the UK stepping up its role in the next one."

"At the beginning, we started as five different nations," said Bulgarian Army Capt Penio Todoranov, company commander with the 61st Mechanised Brigade. "Now we are five nations working together as a team."

During one live-fire attack there were three nations all providing support at once.

A Romanian Air Force aircraft provided close air support, the Royal Marines performed the actual assault and US Marines provided fire support with medium machine guns.

Bulgarian Army Colonel Iavor Mateev, head of the Joint Military Facilities Department at the Bulgarian Defence Ministry, applauded the exercise and said it was an excellent example of forces working together.

While Captain Michael R McNicoll, commanding officer of Golf Company,

2nd Battalion, 8th Marines from BSRF, said: "Platinum Lion 15-3 was designed to promote regional co-operation and foster the ability to work together in order to combat security threats.

"We have done this through realistic training where we shared our ideas, thoughts, techniques, tactics and procedures.

"I believe we have learned a lot from each other.

"I am excited about the progress we have made."

Platinum Lion ended with a warrior day, an athletic event between the services to promote friendly competition.

Pictures:

SSgt Wayne Edmiston, USMC



OA extends its services to Portsmouth

The OA has a long history of supporting former officers into civilian employment and has recently extended its regional reach with the roll out of services in Portsmouth. This is in addition to the activities already delivered in London, Bristol and Leeds. Amongst the services on offer by the OA are personalised 1:1 career consultations, regular networking events and workshops, webinars and an Executive Jobs Board specifically targeting roles suitable for officers. Details can be found at www.officersassociation.org.uk.



Gordon Ross
Career Consultant

Career Consultant Gordon Ross is now available to give advice and guidance on all things employment, whether you are a serving officer, in transition, or considering a career change having left the Services.

After 20 years in the Royal Navy, Gordon accrued a wealth of experience in the commercial sector as Head of HR with GKN Westland Support Services and experience of the Charity sector as CEO of the Fire Fighters Charity.

Officers meet employers at Portsmouth Networking Event hosted by OA

Over 65 officers and employers had the opportunity to network at a recent event held in Portsmouth by the Officers' Association (OA), a charity that offers support and advice to both serving and former officers.



The OA's regional networking events give job seekers the opportunity to meet local employers and former officers who have already made the transition and make new connections as well as research industries and sectors. The OA's recent Portsmouth event brought together Maritime and Defence speakers, from Babcock International and Carnival UK, with former officers who have built rewarding careers along the south

coast and inland areas. Given the large numbers of officers who wish to settle in this region, the OA aims to connect job seekers with employers and reveal the range and variety of opportunities available in the area.

Job seeker Paul Tetlow said: "The presentations and subsequent networking were great facilitators for those employed in civilian companies to share contacts and advice. I walked away with several new ideas and would recommend the event to any service leaver looking for helpful advice."

Upcoming OA events

19th September 2015

Networking Workshop, Fareham - Learn how to be more effective at networking at our one day workshop.

26th November 2015

Employment Symposium, London - Attend our annual employment symposium hosted by Deloitte.

For more information visit:

www.officersassociation.org.uk/events

The Officers' Association works closely with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), Officers' Association (Scotland) and RFEA in addition to a wide range of Service organisations and charities.

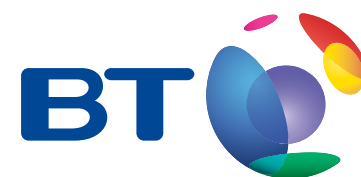
To register for all OA services or book a career consultation please visit: www.officersassociation.org.uk/register

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Liberté, égalité, fraternité, interopérabilité

NOW this is a sight few Royal Navy personnel have ever enjoyed.

In the left-hand seat of his Panther helicopter, Lt Steve Aitken flies along the most famous street in Paris, over the Arc de Triomphe having already passed over the Place de la Concorde in diamond formation. The date is July 14, the most important in the French calendar: Bastille Day.

The flier was one of two Royal Navy officers representing the Senior Service at the national celebrations in the French capital – though the only one flying.

Fellow aviator Lt Mike Curd was on the ground, joining 3,500 French military personnel on parade in front of French President Francois Hollande, guest of honour Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto, and just a few Parisians.

Both men are on exchange with the Marine Nationale, Steve with 36 Flotille Squadron (motto “in nuts we trust”) based in Toulon, Mike at the Ecole Navale near Brest, where he trains French Officer Cadets.

Mike was near the head of the parade column, just behind the Guard and ahead of cadets from his academy.

“Parading up the Champs Élysées was incredible, a once-in-a-lifetime experience and a fantastic atmosphere.

“The whole parade has been drilled hard for the preceding week and I had to modify correct RN sword drill to fit in with the guys next to me but hopefully it is not too obvious.

“It is the first time I’ve had the opportunity to visit Paris and grasped the chance to get my wife and five-month-old son up from Brittany for a few days so they could also take in the experience.”

He and his 80 Ecole Navale comrades were joined by more than 200 vehicles and nearly 250 horses for the impressive military spectacle.

And at the exact moment they were pounding the tarmac of the Champs Élysées, nearly 90 aircraft – over 50 fixed-wing and 31 helicopters – were moving into position overhead for the fly-past.

“It was an awesome experience,” said Steve, who is a flight commander on a three-year exchange with the Marine Nationale.

“Just flying up from Toulon over France is spectacular and I have seen lots of places I hadn’t seen yet so it was a great way to see the country.

“I have had a brilliant time working with the French – they



Meanwhile in Portsmouth... The head of the French Navy was treated to an air-defence exercise aboard HMS Diamond. French Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Bernard Rogel joined the operations room team aboard the Type 45 destroyer as they ran through a simulated air attack.

Accompanied by First and Second Sea Lords – Admiral Sir George Zambellas and Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock – the senior French officer inspected Diamond’s guard of honour before meeting some of the ship’s 190 crew.

The visit came ahead of talks and a dinner on board HMS Victory.

Picture: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson

have a similar way of working to the Royal Navy – and to be able to take part in one of their biggest commemorative events is a great opportunity.”

As for his RN colleague, this is the first time in 11 years he’s not been in a flying job – he was flight commander of a Fleet Air Arm Lynx flight on an anti-piracy

mission with the FS Surcouf back in 2012-13.

He says working at the Ecole Navale – to the French Navy what BRNC in Dartmouth is to the Royal – is “a fantastic job”.

He continues: “It’s quite different from RN officer training in a lot of respects – it’s an academy and the majority of



● Lt Mike Curd is flanked by Ecole Navale colleagues Lieutenant de Vaisseau Yves Andre (l) and Capitaine de Corvette Philippe Clad ahead of the parade

students are there (or attached) for three years, gaining their degree as well as their initial officer training. Contrast that with 30 weeks at Dartmouth!

“My department teaches leadership, so apart from the various elements being spread out over the first two years, the exercises are very similar to those at BRNC.

“Teaching in French has not been easy, but I’ve completed a whole year there now and it does seem to be getting easier!”



● Senior French amphibious officer Capitaine de Vaisseau (Captain) Jean-Michel Martinet discusses Griffin Rise in HMS Ocean’s planning room

Picture: LA(Phot) Luron Wright

‘Stronger together’

A TWO-week table-top war game spread across more than 1,000 miles of land and sea helped the militaries of Britain and France pave the way for their joint expeditionary force.

Some 500 British and 700 French personnel were involved in Exercise Griffin Rise 2015 – 100 of them aboard the UK’s flagship HMS Ocean.

The Mighty O was in the middle of NATO’s Baltops 2015 at the time – and was able to run that ‘live’ exercise simultaneously alongside the Anglo-French staff working together.

Griffin Rise was divided across three locations – Creil, north of Paris, for the ground forces, Lyon for the aerial element and the operations and planning rooms of HMS Ocean for the maritime side of things.

Directing the RN’s involvement was Rear Admiral Tony Radakin, Commander UK Maritime Forces.

At his disposal (on paper): the French carrier battle group of the Charles de Gaulle; an Anglo-French amphibious task force “with a heavier punch than either nation could deliver alone” and an assortment of British and French frigates, destroyers and submarines.

Many of the French staff joined Ocean fresh from operations in the Middle East aboard FS Charles de Gaulle, whose jets were conducting air strikes against the forces of ISIL.

Among them was Lt Cdr James Taylor, an observer with the Baggers of 849 NAS, but attached to the *porte-avions* for just under two years.

“Despite a long history between our two nations we are now closer than we have ever been before. My professional skills have transferred easily across to the French where they are doing exactly the same work as in the UK.

“The French are really committed to the agreement. We have two nations that are very similar with an excellent working relationship. We’ve been doing this from an operational perspective for years, only now we’re formally working a lot closer.”

Capitaine de Corvette (Lieutenant Commander) Stephane Guilan, who’s been on exchange with the RN for the past three years, added: “There have been two real benefits working with the Royal Navy: first, learning the language; second learning the British methods, which are very good. So when you combine British methods and French flair you become stronger.

“The British are also learning from the French as we bring curiosity, competence and understanding.”

Under the 2010 Lancaster House Treaty, London and Paris are committed to creating the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force – the fundamental idea being that the sum is greater than the individual parts.

“It’s a simple concept – the assumption is that militarily we are stronger together,” says Rear Admiral Radakin.

“The philosophy behind the force is of two medium-sized powers in Europe that share common values and interests, and possess credible and sophisticated armed forces, coming together to enhance their shared outlook on the world and their influence in it, as well as their ability to respond to events and maintain stability.”

After the theoretical Griffin Rise comes the more dynamic Griffin Strike next year.

Round de Beers for Diamond

SAILORS from HMS Diamond got their hands on the ship’s namesake gems when they visited legendary jewellers De Beers.

As a reward for their effort aboard the Type 45 destroyer a selection of her ship’s company were treated to a day with some of the world’s most prized gemstones and jewels in London.

De Beers have been associated with the ship since commissioning back in 2011, fittingly presenting a diamond for the occasion.

Since then, when the destroyer’s programme has allowed, her crew have kept their jeweller affiliates up to date with the warship’s activities (she’s currently undergoing maintenance and trials in her native Portsmouth).

Behind the unassuming façade of the diamond merchants’ headquarters they found £1.4bn worth of the precious jewels



stored in their vaults.

Having been told how diamonds are formed and learned about the history of De Beers (traced back to Cecil Rhodes in 1888), the sailors were invited to cast their eye over some

of the firm’s wares, including an uncut diamond valued at £3.1m.

“I can’t believe something so small and rough looking could be worth that much money,” said CPOET(WE) Godfrey James.

The learning experience

wasn’t all one-way, however, as Diamond’s most senior rating WO1 Mark Baker and CPOET(WE) Luke Travell gave a short presentation on what their ship has been up to, notably helping to remove chemical weapons from Syria and the rigours of the Royal Navy’s operational training regime.

The day of diamonds didn’t end there because the sailors were then granted a private tour of the Tower of London by Yeoman Warder Andrew Lane (pictured left), ending with a look around the Jewel House, home to some of the most precious items used in state ceremonies as well as the Crown Jewels.

“The Crown Jewels were awe-inspiring,” said ET(WE) Sam Moore. “To see the Cullinan – at 530 carats the largest, most flawless diamond in the world – summed up the best day ever.”

Man-tastic visit

DESPITE spending just three days visiting the Isle of Man, that was still sufficient time for sailors from HMS Ramsey to help out with the organisation of the world’s most famous motorcycle race.

One third of the minehunter’s crew were invited by one of the ship’s affiliates, the Quilliam Group, to act as marshals at various points around the 37¼-mile TT course, such as CPO Martin Rowley at Brandish Corner.

The TT’s chief marshal was impressed by the discipline and communication skills of the sailors which apparently made them ideal for the job – although female marshals apparently complained there wasn’t a sailor at every post around the track.

And while some of the ship’s company were keeping spectators in check, chef AB Rod Curtland

was being treated to a VIP tour of the grandstand and bike lanes, hosted by the RAF (yes, really) motorcycle team.

Away from the roar of motorcycles, the ship hosted Isle of Man dignitaries while alongside at Queen Victoria Pier in Douglas, plus King William College Navy Cadets and other affiliates from the island (the ship is twinned with its small namesake port a dozen miles up the coast from Douglas).

“Ramsey’s visit was really well received by residents and the ship’s company alike – everyone I spoke with during our flying visit had nothing but very positive feedback,” said Lt Cdr Thomas Weaver, CO of the Faslane-based minehunter.

“One of my sailors described it as ‘the best week of his life since joining the Mob!’”



845 NAS back to pack a punch



● A Merlin Mk3 from 845 NAS taking part in sea trials aboard RFA Lyme Bay

THE Royal Marines have a second squadron of new battle wagons to fly them into action around the globe.

And by welcoming yet more green battlefield Merlin helicopters into the Commando Helicopter Force family, one of the most famous names in the Fleet is back: 845 Naval Air Squadron.

It formally took over the aircraft from RAF's 28 Squadron as the air force's last Merlin formation passed into history.

One former RAF Merlin Mk3 unit has already been transferred to CHF – 78 Sqn became 846 NAS – as the venerable Jungle Sea Kings reach the end of their remarkable careers (they retire at the end of March).

Prince Michael of Kent was the guest of honour as 28 turned into 845 during a ceremony at the home of the RAF Merlin force, Benson in Oxfordshire.

The Honorary Air Marshal of RAF Benson was joined by the head of the Fleet Air Arm, Rear Admiral Keith Blount and Air Vice Marshal Gavin Parker who commands the RAF's No.2 Group.

"This was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the successful transition of the Merlin Force from the Royal Air Force to the Royal Navy," said Cdr Matt Punch, 845's CO. "I am delighted and proud to take command of 845 Naval Air Squadron and look forward to an exciting and bright future."

His squadron stood down as a Sea King formation back in May, handing over the last of its veteran helicopters to 848 NAS who'll see them out of service over the next eight months.

In the meantime, the normally-Yeovil-based 845 NAS are settling down in Oxfordshire until summer of 2016 as air and ground crews get to grips with an aircraft which is at least one generation ahead of the helicopter



● RFA Lyme Bay hosted 845 NAS during sea trials earlier this year

it replaces.

And as they do, 28 will be turning into a Puma and Chinook training squadron preparing RAF fliers for front-line duties.

Prince Michael told the RAF and RN personnel gathered at the air station near Oxford that the "impeccable" parade marking the Merlins' transfer was "a highly impressive and fitting occasion".

He said the Royal Air Force could be proud of the Merlins' accomplishments on active service over the past 15 years – the helicopters have deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Prince Michael continued: "I am also thrilled that the Merlin will continue to serve Her Majesty's Armed Forces with 845 Naval Air Squadron under Commander Punch and I wish them the best as they conquer the challenges of operating at sea."

Wg Cdr Marty Lock, 28 Sqn's Officer Commanding thanked personnel of both Services for their efforts.

"It has been an extremely proud and special time for me to take command of 28 Squadron. I know how hard so many people have worked to get to this point, both 845 taking over from 28 Squadron and also the hard work to ensure we have the Operational Conversion Unit ready."



Java..... 1945
Malaysia..... 1945
Falkland Islands..... 1982
Iraq 2003

Motto: *Audio Hostem*
("I hear the enemy")
Aircraft: Merlin Mk3
Manufacturer: AgustaWestland
Engines: Three Rolls-Royce Turbomeca RTM 322 turbines
Thrust: 2,263shp each
Span: 18.6m
Length: 22.8m
Armament: Two machine guns
Max altitude: 15,000ft
Max speed: 167kts
Aircrew: Four

Honours

Facts



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

ON AN unnamed Royal Navy battleship off Suvla Bay, George Ward Price and the older Henry Nevinston pose – the latter rather formally – for official Naval photographer Lt Ernest Brooks.

Despite their attire, these men are not soldiers – or members of the Royal Naval Division – taking a break from the fighting in the Dardanelles, but official war correspondents.

The younger Price would go on to become the *Daily Mail*'s most (in)famous foreign correspondent who regularly interviewed Hitler and found him "a human, pleasant personality".

The older Nevinston – nearly 60 at the time of the Dardanelles campaign – was a veteran reporter of the wars in the Balkans and South Africa.

He covered the opening rounds of the Gallipoli adventure – the failed attempt by the Royal Navy to force the narrow waters with its castles of steel – back in March 1915.

He returned mid-summer with British, French and Commonwealth troops now ashore, but hemmed in at their beachheads at Anzac Cove and Cape Helles explaining to correspondents already in theatre that "everyone was depressed in England and was hoping for a big victory out here."

They were to be sorely disappointed.

Much more so than the fighting on the Western Front.

The campaign to force the Gallipoli peninsula out of the Ottoman Empire out of the conflict was a journalists' war.

The expedition's commander, General Sir Ian Hamilton was far more open to the war correspondents than any commander on the Western Front or deskbound general



and admiral in Whitehall. He wanted the story of his victory – and that of his forces – to be told.

Tell it they did – but there was no victory and what accounts did reach newspapers (typically about ten days after events) were heavily censored with

thick blue pencil.

"I thought there were limits to human stupidity but now I know there are none. The censorship has now passed beyond all reason," fumed Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett of the *Daily Telegraph*.

"They won't let you give

expression to the mildest opinions on any subjects... Only a few dry crumbs are left for the wretched public."

Price and Nevinston would largely toe the line of the general and his staff – today we would say they had 'gone native'. Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett

would not and his increasingly despondent attitude – Hamilton protested he saw "the black side of every proposition" – apparently led to every journalist being 'exiled' to the island of Imbros, making brief excursions to the front line.

By early September 1915

the last set piece attack to turn the tide in Gallipoli – landings at Suvla Bay – had turned into the third beachhead mired in stalemate (just as Ashmead-Bartlett had predicted).

When Australian journalist Keith Murdoch – father of future Sky and News International magnate Rupert – arrived in theatre, the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent persuaded the new arrival to convey an uncensored dispatch to be presented to Prime Minister Herbert Asquith.

"Even if I am breaking the censorship, that is beside the point," the tortured Ashmead-Bartlett confided in his diary. "The issue now is to try and save what is left of the army."

"Every general I have met, and a great many sailors, have begged me to take some steps to make the truth known to the government."

Murdoch got as far as Marseilles where he was arrested – the authorities were reputedly tipped off by Henry Nevinston – and the damning document seized, while Ellis-Ashmead was unceremoniously booted out of Gallipoli.

But Keith Murdoch continued with his mission, writing his own uncensored letter – 8,000 words based in part on the confiscated document.

It did reach its intended recipient – helping to bring about Ian Hamilton's fall and setting in course the chain of events which would bring about the end of the ill-planned Gallipoli campaign.

■ This photograph (Q 13744) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.

URNUs take on French training

OFFICER Cadets from Birmingham University RN Unit (URNU) got a taste of leadership training French-style. Embarked on HMS Dasher and Express, the cadets and ship's companies were exposed to the full force of French leadership training at a naval base in Brest.

Usually reserved for *Marine Nationale* units preparing for operations, it is believed to be the first time Royal Navy personnel have participated in the exercise, designed to develop leadership qualities and promote teamwork through selflessness and determination.

Using both the rural and urban landscapes, physical trainers from the French Leadership Academy pushed their charges to perceived limits and beyond.

Brick walls, scrambling nets and swimming pools combined with gorse bushes, nettles and boulders to create a testing physical and mental environment.

Tired, scratched and bruised, cadets, officers and ratings completed two gruelling days of tasks which included the recovery of downed pilots and injured sailors.

Even on land no one stayed dry for long as staff made use of hose pipes and the Atlantic Ocean to make life uncomfortable between stances – jogging, crawling and climbing were the order of the day as one student after another took the lead on each successive task.

Lt Dorrington, CO of HMS Dasher, said: "Whilst daunting at first, it was immensely satisfying to see the cadets grow in confidence and stature as the exercise progressed.

"Though tired and in many cases bruised, Cadets from both ships have given 100 per cent and really enjoyed themselves too – we are grateful to the *Marine Nationale* for giving us this opportunity."

Dive boat named

A WORKBOAT with an historic name has been welcomed to Portsmouth Naval Base.

The 15m dive support vessel Tedworth, funded by the Ministry of Defence and built by Meercat Workboats at Portchester, will be used for underwater maintenance, repairs and inspections on Royal Navy vessels and installations including waterfront jetties.

A Great War minesweeper named HMS Tedworth was refitted as a dive vessel in 1923 and served through World War 2, served as a trials vessel for divers testing a new, safer procedure of surface decompression which became known as the Tedworth Method, which is still used today.

A FORMER Army reservist who is a renowned graphic designer and illustrator has recorded his impressions of HMS Bulwark's rescue operation in the Mediterranean.

Dan Peterson was invited to join the versatile assault ship for part of a deployment which saw her pick up migrants attempting to journey from North Africa to Europe in dangerously overcrowded boats.

Dan spent 14 years as a paratrooper in the Territorial Army alongside his work as an illustrator and designer based in Cardiff.

Over a 25-year career Dan has illustrated children's books, medical reference books and board games, been a designer, studio manager, art director and creative director, worked on concept illustration for film and storyboards for television, and for ten years has run his own design and illustration business.

He is also an Associate Lecturer at Cardiff School of Art and Design.

As a reportage illustrator Dan spent a period in Helmand Province in Afghanistan with 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards at the end of 2011 as an MOD official war artist, joining vehicle and foot patrols and combat operations.



● HMS Bulwark's Merlins, captured by artist and illustrator Dan Peterson

of means to achieve his aims. Black-and-white sketches, taking up to half-an-hour, were mostly made on the spot, though some are finished later from memory or digital photographs.

The picture of the boat (*below*) took around ten minutes, as time was short, while the landing craft picture (*below right*) was started as an outline and then worked on and expanded back in his cabin, taking an hour or so in total – though Dan is keen that he does not overwork images as it can lose some of the liveliness.

Drawings were made using artist pens, with washes made using a watered-down acrylic ink.

Colours were usually acrylic inks, though he experimented with water-soluble pencils as well.

Sketches are used to illustrate features for the printed media or online, such as Dan's own blog site – <https://anotherillustrator.wordpress.com>

Sketches can be made available

● (Left) A Navy medic gets details from a teenager with scabies

● A boatload of migrants adrift on the Mediterranean, who were soon transferred to one of Bulwark's landing craft (right)



● (Top) A preliminary sketch in Flight Control in HMS Bulwark by illustrator Dan Peterson (above)



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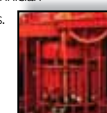
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Wilhelmshaven



Kiel Canal



Kiel

Baltic exchanges



Klaipeda

IF YOU'RE lucky, you'll get away this year. Somewhere sunny, hopefully.

You might get away twice. To different countries.

But if you're planning on hitting seven, maybe eight, even ten lands, you'll probably be backpacking your way around with an Interrail pass...

...or you're a crew member of Task Group 618.01.

Doesn't ring any bells?

It's the collective name for Her Majesty's Ships Pursuer, Biter, Explorer and Trumpeter, gently making their way from one small port to another day after day, flying the flag for Blighty, giving undergraduates a thicker-than-normal slice of Naval life.

The quartet of patrol boats – serving the universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde (Pursuer), Cambridge (Trumpeter), Manchester (Biter) and Salford (Explorer) – are on a two-month odyssey as part of the University Royal Navy Units' annual summer deployment.

Ten students sample two weeks of life at sea with the Senior Service at a time – around 200 young men and women by the time the flotilla returns to Portsmouth this month, mission complete.

The deployment's taken them as far north as

Malmö, as far east as Helsinki and Tallinn, through marvels of man's ingenuity, given an insight into unusual local customs and allowed them to honour their forebears in distant cemeteries.

The four boats left Portsmouth together in mid-June, clocking up visits to Belgium and the Netherlands before hugging the Frisian coast, sailing up the Kiel Canal and into the namesake city just in time for the final few days of Kieler Woche (three million visitors, world's biggest sailing festival) before striking out into the heart of the Baltic.

The boats' size – just 68ft long – means they can visit ports off limits to other Royal Navy vessels deployed to the region like HMS Ocean and Iron Duke recently.

So as well as major cities like Malmö, Riga, Tallinn (where the P2000s shared a berth with the USS Jason Dunham, whose crew showed the students around the destroyer), Helsinki, Ventspils and Liepaja (twice), the boats have called in at Pärnu, Kihnu, Kuressaare in the Gulf of Riga and the island of Naissaar just off the Estonian capital.

The latter is the final resting place of at least ten Royal Navy sailors killed during the Crimean War; despite its name, the 1854-55 conflict saw British and French warships attacking Russian bases and shipping in the Gulf of Finland.

Naissaar was a 'closed

island' throughout the Soviet occupation of Estonia, turned into a centre of naval mine production. Only when the last Russian troops pulled out (leaving a lot of rusting mines behind...) was the native population allowed access, breathing life into villages last inhabited in 1940.

Accompanied by dignitaries including the UK Deputy Head of Mission, Kathryn Lindsay, Explorer and Trumpeter made the ten-mile crossing from Tallinn to the grave site, where Patrik Göransson, vicar of St. Mikael's parish church on the island, and Colonel Tõnis Nõmmik, an 82-year-old former chief chaplain of Estonia's Defence Forces, led a service of thanksgiving before the two P2000 COs laid wreaths.

"For the students, this gives them the opportunity to pay their respects and see a side of the Royal Navy which they may not have had much experience in, but is nonetheless important so that the acts of those who have served before us are not forgotten," said Trumpeter's Lt Chris Chew.

As well as paying their respects, the sailors and students were given a guided tour of the island, including villages abandoned during the Soviet Army's occupation, listening to first-hand accounts of life on Naissaar from those who had either grown up there or those whose families had.

Elsewhere, the sailors and students have joined in

local festivals and customs – traditional dancing in Pärnu, weightlifting and truck pushing on Kihnu – for a unique flavour of Estonian life.

The latter is a small island in the northern Gulf of Riga, about one third of the size of Portsmouth and home to just 600 souls who maintain a very traditional way of life, including wearing national dress every day.

Women are in charge on Kihnu – running the island while their men go to sea to fish for several weeks at a time.

That bond with the ocean is celebrated with the *Kihnu Mere Pidu* (Kihnu Celebration of the Sea for non-Estonian speakers...), aka one big party.

Lt Chew was invited to show off his (lack of) skills at a folk dance, students joined in various 'sporting' challenges against the native populace, among them 'carry-the-local-woman race' (yet to be included in the Olympics...).

"We had a fantastic reception on Kihnu – the welcome we received is testament to the community spirit on the island. Hopefully we showed our gratitude by reciprocating this on board," said Lt Anthony Kane, in charge of Explorer.

The four craft have been escorted by Finnish and Estonian Navy patrol boats, flown over by Polish Air Force Search and Rescue aircraft, and their crews invited aboard a Lithuanian minehunter in Klaipeda.



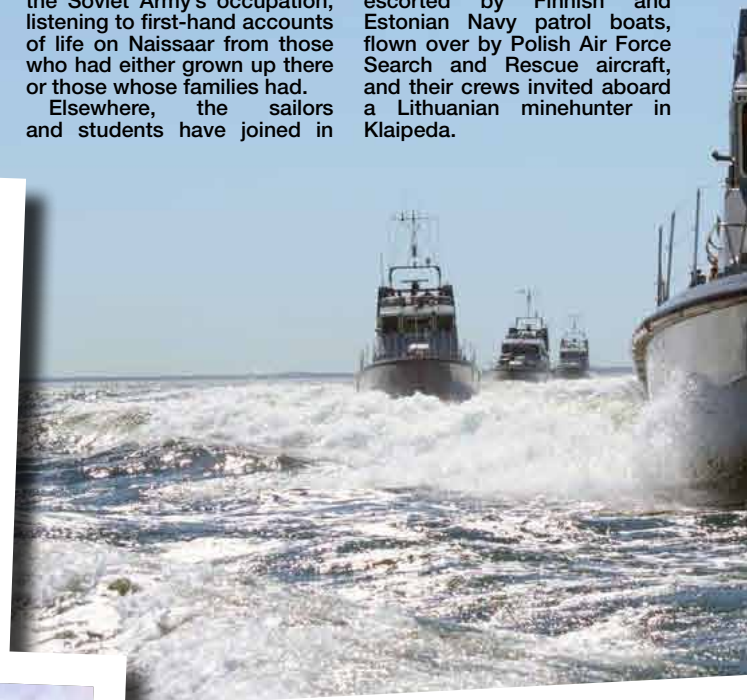
Kihnu



Kihnu



Kihnu



Kihnu



Pärnu



Riga



Although the city is today Lithuania's most important port – and home to its Navy – 100 years ago Klaipeda was known as Memel and part of the German Empire – which is why two British soldiers were honoured here by the visiting British sailors.

Pte Arthur Bunting of the Manchester Regiment and Pte James William Crockson of the Somerset Light Infantry died while held in captivity by the Germans during the Great War and are remembered at the city's Vittener Cemetery.

"The deployment has given me a fantastic opportunity to visit some amazing places which I would never have the chance to see outside the URNU," said Hon Mid Ryan McElney from the Glasgow and

Strathclyde unit.

"Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were all fantastic and are places I won't forget. All the local population were extremely welcoming when the ships arrived and we are extremely humbled by their hospitality."

Biter's CO Lt Stuart Douthwaite said the students in his charge had "a fantastic time" as they honed skills learned during term time – and got to experience other nations' navies and military.

"The excellent reception we have received from nations we have visited so far is a testament to our standing alliances," he continued.

Lt Chew added: "Though the long transits between countries have often been

tiring, they have also been highly rewarding – students have had plenty of time to hone their navigational skills and experience life at sea.

"Both the students and the ships' companies have also received warm welcomes from the local populace in every place the ships have visited."

The quartet are on their way home to UK via Poland and Denmark, making a final stop in Amsterdam before returning to home waters.

Pictures: Lt Chris Chew, Hon Mid Charlie Rounce, Kertu Kalmus, US Navy and UK Embassies in Latvia and Estonia



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From the hell of the bloody Dardanelles to ... a glorious return



● HMS M33 awaits her visitors in No.1 dock at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

THE sole remaining Royal Navy ship from the Dardanelles Campaign is welcoming aboard visitors following an extensive £2.4m conservation project.

HMS M33 first saw action in supporting the British landings at Suvla Bay 100 years ago and now visitors to Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard can experience what life was like aboard the 'lucky' warship, which didn't suffer any casualties during the three-and-a-half years she was away.

A lift or stairs will take visitors down to a viewing platform in No.1 dock for a dramatic look at HMS M33's bow, flat bottom and the 1801 dock structure.

But it is inside the newly dazzle-painted vessel that the Gallipoli story comes to life. The expansive engine room hosts a short, and sometimes graphic, film projected onto the steel-plated hull, giving visitors the chance to immerse themselves in the bloody campaign.

The preservation work aboard M33 offers a unique experience as the ship has been stripped back, with layers of paint on show – all of which have been covered by industrial conservation wax.

"We want to give visitors an understanding of the materials, changes and our conservation approach not to replace or paint over anything but to stabilise it," said project director Matthew Sheldon, from the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

"We have been on a journey, as we have gone along we've done less and kept more of the original paint."

"We developed a philosophy of more conservation rather than restoration."

The main mess deck has been set out to show how the 67-strong crew would have lived, with tables set for mealtimes, hammocks strung along one half of the mess and stacks of ditty boxes, along with shoe and hat



● Ian Clark at work on M33; the ship during conservation work

Picture: Jonathan Eastland/Ajax



boxes. The wardroom, which served the ship's five officers, also features audio, which can be heard as visitors view the galley and private quarters.

The simple displays feature information about the crew, including the ship's dog Squab, as well as a restored fresh water pump on the deck.

M33 was built in a mere seven weeks as a platform for her pair of 6in guns. Flat bottomed, she was able to move close to shore to fire at enemy positions.

She still has two guns, although they are not original to her. Her aft gun came from the WW1 dreadnought HMS Canada, which saw action at the Battle of Jutland.

Her forward gun was built for the cruiser HMS Delhi. Experts from Explosion Museum at Gosport spent more than 1,000 hours restoring the weapons.

Of basic build, M33, which had a speed of 9kts, was constructed of metal without any insulation, freezing in the winter and uncomfortably hot in the summer.

A team of five from Winchester-based Ian Clark Restoration got to experience what life would have been like for her WW1 crew during their seven months working on the ship.

"We worked in below freezing conditions over the winter, while a few weeks ago it topped 100 degrees inside the ship," said

Mr Clark. "Physically it's been very demanding, down to the sheer amount of surface area which we have uncovered. Each compartment has thrown up different challenges and we have tried to blend the old with the new."

Mr Clark's company used their experience conserving Holland 1 to help preserve M33, using 270 litres of industrial conservation wax during their 3,600 hours of work.

"It is probably the first time this type of cutting-edge methodology has been carried out on this scale," said Mr Clark. "It is fine art conservation on an industrial scale."

"I am thrilled with how it has turned out. It is exactly how I envisaged it at the start."

"This is a really bold approach but the interpretation works beautifully."

"The ship was simply constructed but there is honesty in the build. It really has been stripped back."

"We have come to love the ship. It's been challenging but it has been sympathetic to us and we will miss her."

HMS M33, which sits next to HMS Victory, opens to the public from August 6.

The NMRN also has an accompanying

exhibition
Gallipoli: Myth and Memory.



Paying tribute to SAR heroes

AN exhibition chronicling the history of 100 years of Royal Navy search and rescue has opened at the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Somerset.

September 1915 saw Royal Navy Air Service pilot Richard Bell-Davies make the first recognised rescue of a person using an aircraft.

The act earned him the Victoria Cross and heralded the concept of airborne search and rescue.

The exhibition at RNAS Yeovilton shows how SAR has kept us safe on land and sea.

Visitors can hear stories of bravery, try out kit and equipment, plan a rescue, make a distress beacon or build a helicopter.

There is also the chance to climb into the 'banana split', the half yellow, half red painted Sea King.

Saved: 100 Years of Search and Rescue, was officially opened by TV presenter Jules Hudson and veteran RN pilot Capt Eric Winkle Brown, pictured above, who signed a new book about search and rescue, on August 2.

Capt Brown is acknowledged as the world's greatest Naval aviator, holding the record for flying a total of 487 different aircraft during his career.



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Show of Forces



GUILDFORD led the way as the nation showed its appreciation of British Servicemen and women past, present and future during a slew of events around the UK.

Under the banner of Armed Forces Day, communities once again decked out parks, squares and civic spaces with flags and bunting and the general public thronged to meet the people, see the equipment and enjoy a party atmosphere.

The national event in Guildford drew almost 30,000 people to Stoke Park for a spectacular celebration of serving personnel, veteran and cadet forces.

There was plenty of military hardware to inspect, and dynamic displays included the new Commando Helicopter Force Merlin Mk3 – the latest version of the Royal Navy's Junglies.

The day started with a special service at Guildford Cathedral, and the people of Surrey lined the pavements of the county town to cheer as a parade marched by.

Cllr Nikki Nelson-Smith, Mayor of Guildford, said: "It was a very proud moment to stand at the Tunsgate Arch next to His Royal Highness the Duke of York and join the many thousands of people lining the High Street to watch the Armed Forces parade and give a heartfelt welcome to the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force."

Prime Minister David Cameron and Defence Secretary Michael Fallon also attended the event, which ended with a free concert in the park.

Previous host cities of the national event continue to stage attractive programmes on the last Saturday of June each year.

Cardiff has a proud recent history of military showcase events – recent highlights include the AFD national event in 2010 and a 'Meet the Forces' day at the end of the NATO summit in Newport last year.

This summer the Welsh capital again lived up to its reputation, with the city centre packed for a programme based at the city's castle which included a drumhead service.

South Wales was not alone in demonstrating support for the Forces – Welsh Secretary Stephen Crabb also attended the North

Wales Armed Forces Day, held at Colwyn Bay on the Saturday before the Cardiff extravaganza.

Plymouth hosted the main AFD event in 2012, and was once more a focus for appreciation in the South West.

Played out on The Hoe, Plymouth's contribution to the national festival featured an air show including the Royal Navy's Black Cats Wildcat helicopter display team as well as dynamic and static exhibits along the spectacular site overlooking the sea.

In Scotland, the 2011 host city, Edinburgh, marked the day with a parade and events in Grassmarket, in the shadow of the castle, while Glasgow folk had the chance to meet the military at their own event in George Square.

Last year's focal point, Stirling, held a Military Show, while

further north, sailors from the First Mine Counter Measures Squadron (MCM1) proudly paraded through the streets of Inverness as the city saluted the military community.

Next year's national event will be held in North East Lincolnshire, according to Defence Minister Earl Howe.

The area – based around the fishing port of Grimsby and

the adjoining seaside resort of Cleethorpes at the mouth of the Humber – has strong links with the military, from the wartime minesweepers based at Grimsby to the county-wide RAF influence through a clutch of air stations.



● (Above) A Merlin Mk3 of 846 Naval Air Squadron takes part in a display during the national event in Guildford (picture by Sgt Rupert Frere RLC); (left) Sailors from HMS Raleigh on duty at Plymouth; (below) Adela Chudly in the cockpit of a Sea King helicopter on Plymouth Hoe (pictures by LA(Phot) Ben Shread); (right) Maritime Reservists from HMS Flying Fox in Bristol demonstrate firefighting techniques (picture by Rob Wilson, Dev-Toolbox Photography)





DAI HARD

AH, WALES.

Land of my Fathers. Tom Jones. Rugby. Male voice choirs. *Doctor Who*. Slate quarries. Quite a lot of rain. Shirley Bassey. Fiery dragons. Now-dormant coal mines which once fuelled the industrial revolution. Katherine Jenkins. *Ivor the Engine*. Sandy-coloured Jackals thundering down narrow lanes. Royal Marines tearing up the Pembrokeshire turf with anti-tank missiles or stalking through the woodland of the Brecon Beacons.

The country of three million souls is also home to some of Britain's best military ranges.

And Royal Marines aren't going to turn down the chance to use some of Britain's best ranges.

No, they're going to seize the opportunity.

45 Commando shattered the Pembrokeshire peace and tranquillity by unleashing an assortment of firepower...

...While their 40 Commando brethren were *slightly* quieter as they moved through the woods and rolling countryside around Sennybridge.

We'll begin with ten days of blasting, battering, thumping, hoofing action at Castlemartin in south-west Wales.

45 – joined by comrades from 42 Commando (Plymouth) and the Commando Logistics Regiment (Chivenor, near Barnstaple) – rolled into town with a dozen Jackal armoured vehicles to test their heavy

weapons skills.

The Castlemartin ranges on the Angle Peninsula – 350 miles from 45's home in Arbroath – cover 5,900 acres of Welsh countryside and coastline; that's about one third of the size of Plymouth.

They're typically used by the heavy armour of the British Army, but the soldiers also allow live firing by other units wishing to blast away.

With 45 the UK's lead commando group – the Royal Marines unit at immediate notice to deploy around the world should the government require it – they have to be at the top of their shooting game.

Hence, Exercise Falcon Shot (no falcons were shot, we hasten to add...).

The Jackals – armed with heavy and standard machine-guns – roamed around the range, individually, in pairs and in packs of four practising the art of fire and manoeuvre.

The general purpose machine-guns sent their bursts of 7.62mm rounds streaking across Pembrokeshire by day and night.

And for a bit of extra 'kick' there were some 40mm grenades – fired from launchers fitted to adapted SA80 rifles.

The party piece of Falcon Shot was the rare opportunity for some live missile shooting dealing with the ultimate foe of light infantry: heavy armour.



Each Royal Marines unit has a dedicated anti-tank section (in the cunning world of Royal Marines nicknames, they're known as tankies) who use the Javelin to take out threatening heavy metal.

But as well as the Javelin, the commandos are also equipped with the much simpler, but still effective, NLAW – Next-generation Light Anti-Tank Weapon – to destroy enemy armour.

It's about half the weight of Javelin, around one third of the price and effective up to about 600 metres (1,970ft).

It doesn't need an expert to fire it – you can pop off a round in about five seconds – and it'll knock out a Challenger 2 either by plunging down from above or penetrating the

side armour as it strikes at about 200 metres per second (450mph).

If all that sounds a bit too lively, then the lads of 40 Commando slowed things down a degree or two in the Brecon Beacons.

The green berets of 40 Commando tested their leadership skills in the lush – and often very wet – countryside of mid-Wales away from their more regular surroundings of Taunton.

Exercise Alpha Fury (where there was a lot of alpha – the namesake company – but not too much fury) gave marines the opportunity to act as their superiors might do.

They stepped up one rank to see whether they have what it takes to become leaders on the field of battle, making use of the huge Sennybridge range a couple of dozen miles north of Swansea.

In extremely wet weather, the marines were dropped off on the edge of the exercise area and expected to yomp to small covert camps in the woodlands – known as 'harbour positions'.

Major Robert Ginn, Alpha's Officer Commanding, was determined "to push men slightly outside their comfort zone, getting each rank to perform the duties of the rank above – so marines and lance corporals were acting as section commanders, leading small teams".

From there 40 Commando went back to basics, practising field craft,

administrating kit and conducting sentry duties while waiting for the right time to attack.

Using intelligence gathered by patrols, the corporals wrote and delivered orders which laid down the objectives for their future mission. Under the darkness of night, 40 Commando were packed up ready to assault at first light.

"It's good to get back to our 'green skills', and the younger marines have definitely benefitted from the extra responsibilities of learning to do the job one rank up," said Cpl Thomas Hunt, one of those helping run the exercise.

"It helps us all have a wider understanding of how we work as a team under pressure."

Maj Ginn said that having spent a lot of time recently doing a variety of other duties and tasks, it was good for his men to get back into the routine of living in the field.

"We need a marine who takes care of himself, takes care of his opposite numbers and mates and is always good to go so that when the commander needs him, he's ready to act," he said.

Having handed over their role of lead commando group to 45 Commando back in May, the Norton Manor marines are now providing short-term training teams and force protection teams to warships on operations around the globe.



(Sky) pilot project

“HELLO Mike, come in – take a pew...”

Well, what else would you expect from the Chaplain of the Fleet – a friendly welcome in which a religious reference almost slips by unnoticed, *writes Mike Gray*.

And that seems appropriate, given that the primary role of a Naval Service chaplain is not to bang on about deities or sign up acolytes, but to quietly, and without fuss, provide support – and often just to be there.

Better still if the chaplain has a good understanding of the Naval Service.

And Chaplain of the Fleet, the Venerable Ian Wheatley (‘Venerable’ because he is the Navy’s senior Anglican chaplain, and is accorded the Church title of Archdeacon) has that understanding – as a commando-trained former ship driver, he has plenty of credibility.

He joined the RN as a Warfare Officer midshipman in 1981, later training in navigation, and served in a variety of warships – from a minesweeper to the Royal Yacht.

He commanded patrol boat HMS Kingfisher, but by then he was beginning to acknowledge that his career path lay elsewhere.

He resigned his commission in 1990 and returned to Dartmouth to teach leadership and navigation before beginning ordination training at Chichester Theological College.

He was ordained in 1994 and served his curacy in North Devon before returning to the Royal Navy as a chaplain in 1997.

He gained his green beret in 1999, and served in HMS Ocean during the civil war in Sierra Leone, later ministering to the needs of Naval Service personnel



● Chaplain of the Fleet the Ven Ian Wheatley at the RNA Conference in Folkestone

Picture: Nigel Huxtable (RNA)

with 42 Commando in Northern Ireland and the invasion of Iraq.

His understanding of Naval ethos is of particular importance as the chaplaincy undergoes a period of change in the early months of his tenure.

“I have been in the job just seven months, and there is a real sense of challenge,” he said.

“The Navy is at a very exciting time. We have got two carriers coming on stream and the Navy is incredibly busy.

“At a time of significant manpower pressure, those in the Chaplaincy support people deploying away from base port

and those at home as well.

“We are asking folk, for all the right reasons, to do more, and they need looking after properly. It’s what we – and other parts of the Navy – do.

“My key challenge is to make sure I have got chaplains in the right place, in the right rig, at the right time to meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of our people.

“Clergy in general are often in their second careers, so they may be well into their 40s when they join the Naval Service. So my challenge is to recruit them and ensure they adapt quickly to this way of life.

“Obviously, our primary duty is to serve at sea and in the front line so, mindful of our average age, I never stop recruiting new chaplains.

“We potentially have six new regular chaplains joining this year, in a total branch of around 60.

“We are driving hard because we are set to lose several people on age grounds in 2016-17 – it remains a challenging manning issue, particularly as the clergy pool we are recruiting from is shrinking and mature, too.

“Whereas you can recruit young engineers aged 19 and bring them through, our problem is most people in their mid-40s do not see the RN as a realistic proposition; particularly if they have got a family or are used to living in a nice vicarage in the country!

“It’s a big ask – but once chaplains join, we do not struggle to retain them. They love working with sailors and marines, and it is very rewarding.”

The Chaplaincy is evolving with the Navy as new ships and equipment come online.

“I have got to make sure I have got my people in the right place,” said the Ven Wheatley.



Picture: POMA Kevin Carlton (HMS Ocean)

● From left: Revd Matt Godfrey (HMS Ocean), Chaplain of the Fleet the Ven Ian Wheatley and Revd Mark Davidson, 45 Cdo, on the flight deck of HMS Ocean during Joint Warrior earlier this year

“We are at the point of appointing a chaplain to HMS Queen Elizabeth in the next 12 months, which is really exciting. You can imagine the queue of chaplains I have all saying ‘pick me!’ – what a nice problem to have.

“Obviously there are chaplains in the other capital ships too, as well as fantastic roles in Gibraltar, on exchange in the USA and permanently based in the Middle East – basically, wherever our people are deployed, we try to be there, too.

“We are also working hard on our internal organisation to make sure it is both lean and efficient – it may go on in the background, but it is no less critical, because it supports people in the front line.”

With World War 1 anniversaries crowding the calendar it is a particularly busy time for chaplains.

“It is important to celebrate the people who played such crucial roles 100 years ago – we are still a Navy that relies on absolutely everybody, from the youngest ETME to the admiral, and that was as true at Jutland as it is today,” he said.

And while ‘celebrate’ may not be a word that immediately springs to mind when considering the horror of the Great War – it is one that the Ven Wheatley uses deliberately.

“I think people felt a very real sense of pride and calling: this time 100 years ago we know there were queues of men outside recruiting offices, while women were queuing for work in the munitions factories.

“There is a sense of wanting to celebrate people getting involved at a time of national crisis; that willingness to ‘do their bit’.

“There is no such thing as a ‘little’ job in the Navy – that is perhaps why we see things differently to the other two Services. We remain very much ‘all of one company’.

“If you are short of a critical member of a ship’s company your ship will not go to sea. We take that for granted.

“When you think of the Navy 100 years ago, it was at the cutting edge of technology then.

“Young stokers, young gunlayers – like Boy Cornwell VC – were all making it happen.

“That is to be celebrated. It remains the essence of who we are – very much a Naval community.

“That is something the Church ‘gets’ and always has understood, and that is why I think chaplains are important in our integrated world – a good chaplain will work to build up the community.

“It is about both caring for individuals and bringing cohesion – that is what the chaplain can bring.

“In preparation for the Jutland 100 celebrations next year, I have been reading a midshipman’s account of World War 1, and he sometimes talks about the chaplain in less-than-complimentary terms.

“But then at a critical time he gets a problem – a Dear John [letter of rejection from his girlfriend] – and his natural instinct is to turn to the chaplain. He is listened to and taken seriously, and finds some comfort in that.”

The Ven Wheatley has been ‘walking his patch’ since taking up his post.

“I spent some time at sea on Joint Warrior earlier in the summer, just to get alongside

people to see how they are doing.

“Sailors and COs said that their chaplains were doing a good job – and that is appreciated.

“At a time when organised religion as a whole is under scrutiny, it is good to know that the Naval Chaplaincy Service is still delivering and is valued.

“I think it’s important to get out there, and also for people to poke me in the chest or say when things are not right. I am fairly robust.”

Another development on the horizon is the possibility of recruiting world faith chaplains.

“For the past ten years the MOD has used a very good and very dedicated team of five Civil Servants who have covered major world faiths other than Christianity – Judaism, Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism,” said the Ven Wheatley.

“That has been very successful, but we have realised in the past couple of years it is time to explore world faith chaplaincy further – I and the other Services’ heads of chaplaincy are now actively investigating how we might develop the model.”

That exploration involves looking at the systems used by other nations, such as the Dutch, the Canadians and the Americans, and cherry-picking examples of best practice.

Again, the Ven Wheatley is ideally placed to pursue this path, as he has spent time on exchange in San Diego, and retains key links with his old USN colleagues. He recounts that it is interesting that his American opposite number’s ‘top three concerns are the same as ours.’

The delicate question of how to address the Archdeacon for the Royal Navy (the Service has a range of monikers for padres, including ‘Sky Pilot’, ‘God Botherer’, ‘Sin Bosun’ and ‘Amen Wallah’) is not an issue for the Ven Wheatley.

“I have known guys get grumpy about being known as ‘the Bish’, but I am happy to be called ‘Bish’ – or, better still, Ian.

“Not ‘Sir’ though – we are rightly proud of the age-old tradition that the chaplain shares the rank of the person he or she is talking to. ‘Bish’ is just hoofing...”

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Temporary honour

AN HISTORIC Royal Navy frigate has taken over the title of oldest warship afloat in the world – for the next two years, at any rate.

HMS Trincomalee, berthed in Hartlepool’s Historic Quay, takes the honour with the news that the previous incumbent, USS Constitution, has been moved to dry dock until 2017 for major restoration work.

The American ship first sailed in 1797, 20 years before the teak-built Leda-class British ship, which was built in India.

David McKnight, general manager of HMS Trincomalee, said: “It’s a great honour that Trincomalee is now the world’s oldest warship still afloat, albeit temporarily.”

www.hms-trincomalee.co.uk

Mexicans waved off

MEXICAN Navy sail training ship ARM Cuauhtémoc has left Portsmouth Naval Base after a five-day stopover in the city.

The 1,800-ton 67m vessel, commissioned in 1982, represents the Mexican Navy across the world while engaged on training cruises – her ship’s company includes a group of officer cadets in the final stages of their four-year courses.

While in Portsmouth the ship – one of four sisters representing South American navies – was open to visitors during Armed Forces Week activities.

Many of her 268 sailors managed to get around the city and beyond, including a training division of 60 young officers who visited HMS Collingwood where they undertook a series of leadership exercises as well as trying their hand in the bridge simulator.

A dozen-strong party who went on board Type 45 destroyer HMS Daring to view the bridge, operations room, ship control centre, hangar and flight deck.

Picture: Nigel Huxtable





● Above: A Fairey Swordfish from the Royal Navy Historic Flight; Right, Toby and Stephen Dunthorn photograph the aircraft; The Royal Navy's Black Cats display team in their Wildcats; The world's only flying Avro Vulcan B2 bomber took part in a flypast

Pictures: POA(Phot)Mez Merill and LA(Phot) Iggy Roberts



Fleet Air Arm's past, present and future star at air day

Farewell to the King

THE BRIGHT blue skies were turned black but the crowds didn't want to leave.

Ending RNAS Yeovilton's International Air Day was the adrenaline-fuelled Commando Assault, featuring smoke bombs and flares.

It proved a poignant finale, as the Sea King Mk4 displayed at the Somerset base for the final time before she goes out of service in 2016.

The Commando Assault was a farewell to the Sea King and an introduction to the Fleet Air Arm and Commando Helicopter Force's newest aircraft, the Wildcat HMA Mk2 and the Merlin Mk3.

Lt Col Derek Stafford RM, Commanding Officer of 846 NAS, said: "For the Commando Helicopter Force this is an enormously historic and emotional year as we transition from the Sea King, a wonderful helicopter that has served us faithfully in many operations, to the exceptionally capable Merlin."

The 37,000-strong crowd clapped and yelled as the Sea Kings took a

final bow. They didn't want to leave.

Four times they were requested to leave the site. But there was always time for a final photo of the static aircraft.

Spectators basked in glorious sunshine as RNAS Yeovilton, marking its 75th anniversary, took a flight down memory lane – as well as a look to the future.

The show provided a day of lasts.

The last time a Sea King from 771 NAS search and rescue will appear at Yeovilton as it is being disbanded next year. The last time the Vulcan B2 bomber will appear at the show as it is in its final display season.

An emotional Robert Pleming, who originally saved the aircraft for public display, said: "I'm proud of my achievement and of the team. It's the last time we fly at Yeovilton which is always a brilliant home-from-home for the aircraft."

"I'll be sad to say farewell, but it's the thousands of fans who I feel most sorry for. I always look at the crowds' faces when the Vulcan flies – she brings a broad smile to everyone's

face. That makes everything we've done worthwhile."

Among the many impressive displays, both static and flying, the crowds were bowled over by the Jordanian Falcons and amazed at the skill demonstrated by the Pitts Specials, who captivated with acrobatic and spellbinding agility.

Commentator George Bacon said: "The Pitts Special pilot has physically experienced in just eight minutes what a Formula One driver experiences in two hours of a Grand Prix. It's like being in a tumble drier."

Visitors came from far and wide, including seven 'spotters' from Sweden.

Grandparents Joy and Iain Russell drove from their Cumbria home to treat their grandchildren Lauren, nine, and Liam, seven, to a great day out.

"We came here last year and thought the children would love it, and they have," said Joy.

Liam announced he wanted to be a pilot and said: "I like the planes, particularly the really noisy Vulcan."

The Fleet Air Arm demonstrated

their front-line capability with displays from the Lynx Wildcat Maritime Force, including the very latest edition to the family, the Wildcat HMA Mk2, and the Royal Navy's Black Cats Display Team, the first time the base's display team took to the skies as a pair.

Lead pilot Lt Dave Lilly said: "This was a fantastic and extra special display for us. It was the first time we've done a public display operating with the two new Wildcats at our home base in front of our home crowd. It's a privilege to show our community what we can do."

His display colleagues are Lt James Woods, Lt Ash Morgan and Lt Andrew Henderson.

Other attractions included a Field Gun demonstration by HMS Heron, this year's record-breaking winners of the Brickwoods Trophy, and the Commando Helicopter Force (CHF) Forward Operating Base.

Alongside the aircraft of the FAA and CHF were two Apache AH1s from the Army Air Corps' Apache Display Team.



● Spectators take their place on the flightline; Below, action from the Commando Assault



● CHF's new Merlins join their veteran Sea Kings for a display at RNAS Yeovilton's Air Day

So that gods m



SO, IS there a better office view anywhere in the Royal Navy?

Or the UK for that matter?

Ok, so it's a bit of a trek to the 'bright lights' of RNAS Yeovilton (about three miles) if you fancy some scan...

...but there is a canteen on this side of the airfield.

And with all that glass, it could be like a hothouse at this time of year. They've even thought of that, courtesy of air con.

Because you really don't want the eight men and women on duty here getting sweaty, flustered, or tired.

This is the nerve centre of the Fleet Air Arm's biggest air base, known simply as 'The Tower'.

It's down to the engineers and technicians to make the aircraft serviceable, the crews to fly them and the tower to ensure they land and take off safely.

With seven Fleet Air Arm squadrons (or elements thereof), the RN Historic Flight, plus one Army Air Corps formation and a civilian flying club, there can be a couple of hundred movements a day (that's about double Southampton and Bournemouth airports, although only around one sixth of what Heathrow deals with).

In fact, Yeovilton (and Culdrose) share far more with their civilian counterparts than you might think.

Take the runways. 27/09. 22/04.

These are not random numbers but the two strips' bearings. The main mile-and-a-half long runway lies on a straight west-east axis: 270° and 090°.

And the shorter landing strip, which runs close to the Fleet Air Arm memorial church in Yeovilton village and 'spotter alley' where the aircraft buffs lie in wait with their cameras, lies at 220°/040°.

It's a tried-and-tested method of naming runways the world over: Heathrow, Gatwick, JFK, Schiphol, Culdrose...



RNAS Yeovilton is Britain's biggest and busiest air station – you could call it Heathrow to Culdrose's Gatwick. How do you ensure the mix of helicopters, visiting jets, vintage Fleet Air Arm aircraft and private fliers all operate safely? RICHARD HARGREAVES spent a day in the control tower to find out.

But then the entire runway and airspace around it are run, by and large, just like their civilian counterparts: the same procedures, the same phraseology.

"We went to Amsterdam on holiday recently, waiting on the taxiway at Schiphol for ages to take off. We knew exactly what was happening," says duty air traffic control officer Lt Zoe Bowness, in charge of the VCR – Visual Control Room (the greenhouse-type structure with angled windows offering panoramic views which you immediately identify with airport control towers) – this beautiful summer's morning.

In the summer, it's 9.30am before flying begins at Yeovilton – the WAFUs take advantage of the extended daylight to fly into the evening if necessary.

The tower is alive long before that. Long, long before.

The first meteorological observer is in at 2am to begin taking readings, followed by a forecaster around 3.30am.

It means that when the aircrews arrive to begin planning the day's sorties, 6, 6.30am, a 12-hour forecast is ready for them.

It's not the forecast that you'll get from Carol Kirkwood or Tomasz Schafernaker on the telly. They only do forecasts in 2D: what time is the weather front going to pass over my house? Will I get wet? Can I put the washing out to dry?

Navy meteorologists do it in 3D.

The forecast from Yeovilton's met office covers a 100 nautical mile radius from the air station and goes all the way up

to 30,000ft... which means about 2,000 cubic miles of air.

Struggling to picture 2,000 cubic miles of air?

It's roughly the volume of the Grand Canyon. Or you could accommodate six billion people. Per cubic mile. Yes, really.

This third dimension includes the density of the air for lift, humidity, the temperature and altitude at which icing (very bad) occurs, and cloud cover and visibility – measured in oktas (0 is clear, 1-2 means a few, 3-4 scattered clouds, 5-7 broken cloud and 8 is overcast).

And while Culdrose is (infamously) prone to being fogged in by low cloud, Yeovilton, which sits in a bowl surrounded by hills, suffers from radiation (ground) fog.

We'll come back to 2/3D later.

Weather doesn't just affect the ability to fly. It also impacts on the ability to *fight*. The forecasters in the tower are finding themselves increasingly called upon to offer advice on how climatic conditions will affect radar, thermal imaging systems and other sensors – all key to 21st Century Naval aviation.

On top of the 12-hour reports, every three hours, there's a nine-hour look-ahead produced just in case aircraft (civilian or military) might need to divert to Yeovilton. And just for good measure, they'll take hourly readings.

Whether (no pun intended) at Yeovilton, Culdrose, on HMS Queen Elizabeth or Ocean, the met man (or woman) is god. No meteorological approval. No flight.

Ok, maybe not god.

"We do have to remind the squadrons we're in 'advertising' not 'production' – we can't control the weather. It's not our fault if it's bad," says Yeovilton's senior meteorological officer, Lt Cdr Chris Hutchinson.

"The reality is, the squadrons are very appreciative of the service we provide – and that makes it a very rewarding job for us."

Around the same time as the pilots and observers are poring over charts and met reports, PO(AC) Jucinta Marshalsea is driving around the entire airfield, ensuring lights, runway nets and barriers are in working order, ensuring the runways and taxiway are free of FOD – Foreign Object Debris: anything which could be flung up to damage an aircraft or its engine, from blades of grass to clumps of earth, stones, nuts, bolts, even dead animals.

The physical inspections done, it's time to climb several storeys to the VCR.

Today, I'm guessing the cloud cover is 1 or 2 oktas. There's almost no breeze. Visibility is excellent. You can easily see the 960ft Mendip TV mast at Wells (15 miles to the north) and Glastonbury Tor (ten miles away).

Jucinta and her colleagues only take charge of incoming aircraft at five miles out.

Until then, they're in the hands of the team in the aircraft control room on the ground floor.

They don't have the best office view in the Navy. They don't have any view. They do have nice clear multi-colour radar displays.

If you close your eyes to the air station itself and its (invariably less-than-attractive) structures, then Yeovilton is about as rural as rural England gets.

But we're thinking in two dimensions again.

Overhead, it's like the M25 – although even on a crystal-clear summer's day that's not too evident; there are no tell-tale vapour trails scarring the peerless sky.

But what the Mk1 eyeball cannot see, Yeovilton's radar can.

The Naval Air Station is a good distance from the giants of aviation like Heathrow and Gatwick,

Manchester, Birmingham.

But Bournemouth is 33 miles from Exeter. Cardiff – amazingly – is a mile from Yeovilton's airspace. And Bristol is 10 miles to the north.

There are other military fields (Yeovilton's satellite) is a dozen miles to the east, with Middle Wallop a provocation throw away. And there's a good number of flying clubs and minor fields.

Which makes for very busy airspace.

"There is a lot of civilian traffic in the world," says Lt Tony Ward, who takes conversations to give instructions to pilots and hand a flight strip (a small piece of paper with an aircraft's basic details scribbled on).

This seamless switch between civilian and military instruction happens throughout the day. In radar control as Tony and his fellow controllers calmly and clearly pass on direction and information from pilots.

They use terms like squawk, follow me, and a digit figure – an aircraft's unique code which allows controllers on the ground to identify other planes or helicopters in the sky.

Or 'flight Level 65' – 6,500ft.

Because however pin-sharp the controller's display of the radar screen, it's not the controllers have to think in that third dimension.

"You either love this job or hate it. It's incredibly satisfying at times, but it's also incredibly stressful at times, because I have a problem-solving mind. I'm a former Bagger observer who's been in the world of ATC."

"Pilots only crash into other pilots when they can't see each other. We make sure they can't reach that stage."

He and his colleagues control for two hours at a time without a break. It's minutes if it's exceptionally busy.

Pretty much everyone (me included) who works in air traffic control is stressful.

It's an incredibly *responsible* job. But the tower keep stress firmly in check.



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"I think being a nurse in A&E on a Saturday night is much more stressful," says Tony.

Zoe adds: "You need a calm demeanour. You can't be a stress head. There are a lot of things happening at the same time, so you've got to be flexible and be able to think on your feet.

"I love my job. When I go home each night and everyone has flown safely, that's a very nice feeling."

As far as they're concerned, being too quiet – 'under arousal' – is, potentially, far more dangerous than skies filled with aircraft, particularly if you suddenly have to stir yourself to deal with a glut of planes after a dearth.

And you don't get much more of a glut of aircraft than around Yeovilton Air Day.

There were 69 different aircraft types appearing either on the ground or in the skies at this year's celebration of aviation.

It takes the station's flight planning manager Roger Bodnarchuk (better known as 'Mr B') six months to sort out their arrival and departure.

Or, as he puts it, borrowing from the late Brian Hanrahan: "I counted them all in – and I counted them all out again."

"This is a busy job around Air Day – the rest of the time it is mostly mellow."

His job is to sort out flight plans for 'non-local' traffic.

Any aircraft taking off and returning to Yeovilton on a sortie is local traffic. Everything else isn't, such as the Wildcats of 825 NAS, who recently headed to Ovar in Portugal for some training.

For that you need to file a flight plan. It's not about navigation. It's about informing radar controllers and international authorities of your flight – and any military aircraft operating in another country's airspace requires diplomatic clearance.

"Flight plans look like gobbledegook. They're our bread and butter," says Mr B.

Actually, flight plans look rather like Enigma signals which haven't been decoded/translated (and look like gobbledegook...).

If you're heading for Yeovilton, you'll need to address it to EGDY (E for Europe, G for GB, DY

is Heron's code; Culdrose is EGDR); there's a handbook containing all the codes. No, it's not a cracking read...

You will find information like the aircraft type, point and time of departure, altitude, speed, route and so on.

There's an A4 folder filled to bursting with these flight plans for air day.

In the tower, the day-long show is "a great experience," says Jucinta.

"It's the chance to handle different aircraft, especially the Vulcan. But it's also very stressful – and just for good measure, there are pleasure flights taking off every couple of minutes as well as all the aircraft taking part in the displays."

Her VCR and air traffic control colleague LAC Henry Parish loves working with another infrequent visitor, the RAF's C17 Globemaster – a 130-tonne 'flying ferry' which has been used to bring RN Sea Kings back from Afghanistan in the past. It's "just mental".

He adds: "Its stopping power is incredible. And the power of the jets you wouldn't believe. They blew down the fence and we had sheep on the field."

Which you don't want. They would be ultimate FOD. But at least they're easy to spot. Every couple of hours, airfield services manager Steve Haines takes on a sweep of the entire airfield in Ground Rover 1, a big yellow 4x4, in search of less obvious debris.

"Anything which shouldn't be on a runway is a danger," he says as we drive at a leisurely 15mph around the airfield.

Suddenly, on the standings not far from 815 NAS' hangars, Steve hits the brakes. He clambors out, bends down and wanders back with a couple of pebbles in his hand – neither more than a centimetre across. No, I never saw them. Not even when we were stopped.

"You're dealing with people's lives, so that means I have to be at the top of my job and I do it to the very best of my ability," says Steve, a former soldier who is determined to keep his feet "firmly on terra firma".

This is all part of what you might call a subtle obsession with safety which permeates the

running of the airfield side of things at Yeovilton.

There's a team constantly updating NOTAMs – Notice to Airmen, to aviators what a Notice to Mariners is to seafarers – with details of no-fly zones (such as the one enforced over Glastonbury festival) anything tall which is a permanent or temporary danger to fliers such as construction cranes or masts, firework displays (the big public ones, not a box of Standard in the back garden...), laser light shows or sky lantern festivals.

There's the runway caravan – actually a red-and-white checkered truck (think: Croatian national football team strip...) parked at one of end of the runway, crewed by an air traffic control assistant, who carries out a final visual inspection of taking-off and landing aircraft.

There's a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to alcohol; just like those who are flying, there should not be a drop of alcohol in the controllers' blood while working – no drinking the night before duty.

And there are few other things which might surprise you observing proceedings in the 'new' tower (actually a decade old), which sits on the south side of the airfield (the one it replaced was on the busier northern end, but the view it offered controllers was not this comprehensive):

1. It's very quiet. Not just the measured voices of those marshalling movements but the double-glazing is *really* effective; despite the Wildcats, Jungle Merlins and Sea Kings, Grobs buzzing around, even the Sea Vixen from the RN Historic Flight firing up its Rolls-Royce Avon engines, you're largely shielded from the roar.
2. Everything has a call sign. Virus and Reptile (Hawk jets visiting from RAF Valley). Peregrine (the bird control Land Rover). Britannia 224 (one of the Grob Tutors used to see whether trainee officers have what it takes to become a pilot or observer). The airfield safety vehicle. The lawnmower.
3. For an establishment focused on the air, there's a lot happening on the ground. There's always something on the move, from cars making their way from the main part of

the base to the south side (the tower is a two-and-a-half-mile drive around the perimeter road) to various service and support vehicles moving up and down either the runways or loops, taxiways and standings.

Right now Grasscutter 1 (that would be the lawnmower...) is moving slowly along the edge of Runway Two-Seven, gently scything its way through the green, green grass of Somerset (it's kept short, unlike at fixed-wing airfields, just in case helicopters have to set down there) and any weeds proliferating.

Weeds = bad. Not because they're aesthetically-challenged or because they strangle other flora.

Buttercups attract insects. Insects attract birds. *Your knee bone's connected to your thigh bone...*

Like weeds, birds = bad. Bird strikes can be lethal. To cockpit canopies. To engines (ask Capt Chesley B 'Sully' Sullenberger, who famously – and safely – brought down his Airbus in the Hudson after birds knocked out both its jets).

Actually, not all birds are bad. Cadbury the peregrine falcon and his pals (you met them in last month's edition) are good birds who chase off bad birds as part of Yeovilton's avian control unit.

They're not the unit's sole weapons. There's also Peregrine – a green Land Rover which drives around scaring birds.

It pulls up sharply near a small flock of rooks, broadcasts the chatter of other birds over loudspeakers. The rooks scatter. There's no need on this occasion to resort to 'bird scarers' (flares).

At the opposite end of the airfield, Britannia 224 is stuck in 'Lazy Lane' – a little taxiing loop at the beginning of 09 – with a flat tyre.

Virus and Reptile are now running late. A Wildcat is heading away from 'Point East' – part of an invisible aerial loop away from the main runways used by helicopters – while a Jungle Sea King is on its way back in.

A yellow fuel truck pulls up next to the Sea Vixen to refuel its gluttonous engines.

Grasscutter 1 is on the radio again requesting permission to work on Runway 22.

It's all happening simultaneously. And it's all effortlessly directed by the tower team.



Pictures: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill and LA(Phot) Ioan Roberts

Survivor kept detailed account of sinking of WW1 Q-ship 'I thought my end had come'

NEXT year marks the centenary of the sinking of HMS Bergamot, an Anchusa-class Q-ship, by the German submarine U-84 off Ireland, during World War 1.

Q-ships were heavily armed decoy vessels designed to encourage German U-boats to surface.

Bergamot was built in 13 weeks, was commissioned on July 13 1917, torpedoed at 13 minutes to nine on August 13 1917 and lost 13 hands.

One of the survivors was **Henry Wilson Hanlon**, known as Harry, who joined the Navy at the age of 16 in 1910 and served for 31 years over almost five decades.

He died in 1983 at the age of 89 and his family discovered he had written a first-hand account of the demise of HMS Bergamot.

On July 13 1917, one of our new pattern Q-boat sloops was commissioned on the Tyne. The trials etc, having been accomplished successfully, we started off to our future base at Buncrana (a small town on the shores of Lough Swilly in County Donegal, Ireland).

With the exception of a few submarine scares, nothing eventful happened for a few weeks. One Monday forenoon however we left Buncrana on what proved to be our last patrol.

At 8pm I came off watch from the engine room. My quarters were for a'd, and it was getting on towards 8.30 before I was washed and sat down to supper.

The Chief Petty Officers all lived for a'd. – luckily for us – and a fair percentage of them had turned in.

Nothing was further from our minds than the catastrophe which was at hand. Suddenly we felt a fearful rending crash followed by the escape of hissing steam.

All the lights went out at once, and for a moment or two pandemonium was let loose, as everyone in our compartment crowded to the one means of exit – an iron ladder to the upper deck.

I was one of the last to get up, and immediately made my way up to the bathroom where my life-jacket was. By the time I forced the door (which had jammed) found and donned it, all but a few had gone to the boat decks.

From my position I could see nothing of the effects of the explosion as the after part of the ship could not be seen from there – that it was caused by a torpedo was only too evident.

The ominous lurching of the ship to port as we settled down, warned me that it was high time to get out of her, so without further hesitation I rushed to the boat deck only to find that both the midship lifeboats were at least 300 yards away.

However, nearby I saw one of the rafts, quite near the station which was tilting upwards. It was only then that the full magnitude of the disaster appeared to me.

The after well deck was flush with the water and the ship quickly breaking in two.

The torpedo had struck her on the port side, entered the Auxiliary Engine Room and burst the divisional bulkhead between it and the Main Engine Room, blowing the dynamo to pieces.

The watch keepers had a narrow escape in the latter department, the ERA managing to reach the ladder before he was overwhelmed by the inrush of water. The two stokers floated up and all three were eventually saved. Unfortunate

Illustrious career

January 1 1910: Enlists at HMS Figsard age 16

January 8 1914: Qualifies as ERA 5th class

April 2 1914: Joins HMS Ajax

July 28 1914: Start of World War 1

December 15 1914: Posted to HMS Highflyer

1914-17: Visited Cape Verde, West Africa, West Indies and North America

April 21 1917: Posted to Vivid (Devonport)

July 13 1917: Posted to HMS Bergamot

August 13 1917: Vessel torpedoed and sunk

September 1918: Marries Lesley Foster in Plymouth

November 11 1918: End of WW1

June 16 1919: Posted to HMS Voyager

1926 – 1932: Served in HMS Durban, Hood, Daffodil, Centurion and Dunbar

January 13 1934: Retires at rank of Chief ERA 2nd Class

September 28 1938: Re-enlisted

October 1938: Joins HMS Ceres

April 1940: Promoted to Chief ERA

1941: East Africa, British Somaliland, blockade of Italian Somaliland and Cape Horn convoy duties

December 17 1941: Joins HMS Forth

September 8 1945: Released

'Class A' after 31 years of service

however were the occupants of the AER.

The Leading Stoker was killed while the storekeeper was severely cut on the head but was also saved. The officers' quarters suffered severely, the Chief Engineer, Chief ERA, a lieutenant, and the paymaster being drowned or killed.

The 1st Lieutenant was picked up unconscious by one of our boats – wounded in the legs and head. The fate of these of course I learned afterwards.

I hadn't been on deck for more than a few moments when a sudden lurch made me lose my footing and I was thrown into the sea. On coming to the surface I struck out for the raft.

The ship's end was drawing very near. Her stern and bow had reared themselves in the air and as I reached the raft, a tremendous explosion took place, probably through the depth charges exploding.

The raft turned 'turtle' and I again went under water. The concussion caused a sickening sensation in my stomach and



● Harry pictured with his wife Lesley and their children Maureen and Eileen around 1923

Two world wars and a sweet shop

HARRY Hanlon was born in Lismore, County Waterford, Ireland on January 14 1894 – the fourth child of Robert, a clerk-of-works and Annie, a shopkeeper.

In 1918 he married Lesley Foster and they had two daughters, Eileen and Maureen, who tragically died at the age of 16 in 1938.

After leaving the Royal Navy, Harry and his wife ran a sweet shop in Devon, from which Harry also ran

a lending library.

Lesley passed away in 1980 and Harry nine years later.

He has three grandchildren who all live in the USA and it was from there that Harry's written account of the sinking of HMS Bergamot was sent to his nephew Colin Foster in the UK.

The original account has been donated to the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

for a few moments I thought my end had come. However it soon passed away and coming to the surface I regained the raft.

Several times it overturned through ill balancing on the part of the occupants. Later one of the boats took a couple on board greatly to our relief as we had been greatly exhausted by the frequent submersions.

Night was now coming on fast and to add to our troubles the form of a large submarine loomed up in the near distance.

No.1 lifeboat was now about two miles away, while No.2 had the two rafts in tow, on one of which was our captain.

A hail came from the German craft asking where he was. We replied: "In the other boat, sir." Both her guns were trained on us and we feared the worst but the Germans carried on her way after No.1 lifeboat.

It seems that he went close alongside her and hauled the ship's steward on board, he being the only one who had a collar and tie on and so looked most like an officer.

Our fate hung in the balance for some time as the U-boat commander closely questioned the steward as to the particulars of our ship, where bound

to, etc. He however kept his head and managed to deceive the pirate as to her nature.

Finally, he was told to go back to the boat, the commander giving him a cigarette and also transferred to the boat a wounded man the submarine had picked up. He was given a glass of port wine and with a farewell "see you after the war" she vanished in the night mists.

We were in No.2 lifeboat (the captain having ordered the occupants of the rafts to transfer to her) having lost sight of No. 1.

We took in turns to pull at the oars (there being no breeze), a course being shaped towards Lough Swilly about 100 miles away.

When I say that there were 48 of us in this boat some people may be inclined to turn sceptical. However, it remains a fact and can be proved if inquired into.

The boats, per Admiralty order, contained a supply of biscuits, a couple of tins of corned beef and a small keg of water each. As there were so many of us the captain decided to dole out a gill of water and two or three biscuits per man, daily.

Tuesday morning broke cold and cheerless, but towards midday a slight

breeze sprung up so we got the sail up and made better headway.

The sun also came out which dried our clothes somewhat. That evening the wind freshened a lot, but owing to our cramped positions and the boat being heavily laden, we shipped a lot of water and got wet through again.

Wednesday morning found us still forging ahead, but no land in sight and it wasn't until midday that we were electrified by a shout from the signalman – who had been continually scanning the horizon with his glasses – "Land on the starboard beam, Sir".

The captain took his glasses and verified his statement, which of course put new life into us.

Unfortunately the wind had partly died down and 5pm found us still five miles from the mouth of Loch Swilly, as it proved to be. All hands however were feeling stronger and more cheerful as the captain had all the remaining provisions and water served out.

About 6pm we managed to draw the attention of a large trawler – the Lord Lister – and shortly afterwards we were helped aboard, her crew showing us every kindness.

The captain collapsed on reaching her deck. He had stuck to his task of steering the boat ever since that fatal Monday evening and had to be taken to hospital, along with four others, on reaching land.

He deserves praise for his skill and endurance, but as far as we know has received no recognition from the Admiralty so far, for the simple reason, I suppose, that there was no one of superior rank to recommend him.

No.1 lifeboat reached the rocky shores of South Donegal about 2am on the Thursday, where they were kindly treated by the coastguards, all survivors finally being dispatched to England and Buncrana.

Family join tribute to WW1 submariner

IN THE granite village of Rothes, Duncan Dunbar-Nasmith looks at a new paving stone celebrating the deeds of his grandfather – arguably Britain's greatest WW1 submariner.

One hundred years ago, Lt Cdr Martin Nasmith ran amok with his boat HMS E11 in the Sea of Marmara – strangling Turkish supply lines to the Gallipoli peninsula.

On three separate patrols, the officer forced his way through the treacherous waters of the Dardanelles – narrow and heavily patrolled and mined by the Turks – and spent more than three months sinking enemy shipping at the rate of nearly one vessel a day.

Those deeds earned him the nation's highest military decoration in 1915 and, a century later, the latest Victoria Cross stone to be installed in one of the nation's pavements as part of Great War centenary commemorations.

Around 20 present-day submariners from HMS Neptune, led by Cdre Mike Walliker and the Silent Service's Command Warrant Officer WO Stefano Mannucci, headed to Rothes, near Elgin, for the service to dedicate the slab which lies in the shadow of the village war memorial.

There they joined the family of the VC winner – who



rose to the rank of admiral, served as Second Sea Lord and commanded the Western Approaches in the early days of WW2 – Rothes' dignitaries, Sea Cadets and the Royal Marines Band Corps of Drums.

The actions of Martin Nasmith – he became Dunbar-Nasmith in 1920 when he married – in the Marmara in 1915 are, says Cdre Mike Walliker, Deputy Rear Admiral Submarines, "the stuff of legend".

Nasmith wasn't the first submariner to guide his boat into the inland sea, but what he did there severely impeded

supplies flowing across the sea – troops, ammunition, food – to Turkish troops engaged with Allied Forces on the tip of the Gallipoli peninsula.

During three patrols of Marmara lasting 96 days he sank 94 ships. He famously swam out to recover torpedoes which missed their target so they could be used again.

In June 1915, he sneaked into the harbour at Constantinople – today Istanbul – and destroyed a cargo vessel, blowing it up in full view of Turkish grandees on the quayside.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to the likes of Martin Nasmith," said Cdre Walliker. "Although the Submarine Service was born in 1901, it really came of age in World War I."

Among the Dunbar-Nasmith family members present was the VC winner's son, Sir James, one of the country's leading conservation architects, who was touched by the large turn-out for what was "a wonderful occasion for the family."

He continued: "I was surprised by how much some of the Naval people knew about my father – it is clear he remains quite a significant figure in the Service today."



● Duncan Dunbar-Nasmith by his grandfather's VC stone

Our ambition is our future

A NEW phase in the political cycle in the UK also heralds a fresh look at the nation's defence – and the strategic context looks very different from the past couple of decades.

In recent years Afghanistan has been the 'main effort', a long and difficult land campaign in which the Senior Service played a significant role.

But the signs are that defence in the future will be in the shape of agile, limited interventions to protect UK national interests in an increasingly globalised, interconnected – and highly unpredictable – world.

Myriad factors cloud the picture with uncertainty – low oil prices are good for global growth, but may destabilise nations that rely on its income, for example.

But other factors have endured over the centuries – as an island nation that trades globally, the UK relies on the respect and influence garnered by the Royal Navy whether in the political, economic or diplomatic arena.

Our nation is a highly-visible member of all the important international institutions, such as the UN Security Council, NATO, the G7 and the G20.

We also continue to be a valued strategic partner of the United States – of which more later.

With the UK currently the sixth largest economy in the world – and the Centre for Economic and Business Research predicting, in 2013, that it will be the largest in Europe by 2030 – the Royal Navy's role in protecting global trade is unlikely to diminish.

We still remain overwhelmingly dependent on seaborne trade – 95 per cent, by volume, is transported in ships – and the Navy, alongside the navies and coastguards of like-minded nations, helps keep the busy sea lanes flowing freely.

That could mean tackling piracy in a constabulary role, or providing a quiet credible and reassuring presence at maritime chokepoints, whether in the Strait of Hormuz or rather closer to home in the Strait of Dover.

Guaranteed rights of passage are vital to the UK as our 'just enough, just in time' economy creates giant floating warehouses en route to British ports – a supply chain strung out across the seas.

That maritime security role also has a wider strategic effect. Stability in sea trade means stability in the global economy, which fosters confidence in the markets – and London, as one of the leading financial centres, will benefit more than most, generating income for the UK.

Another trade-related influence is the procurement of high-tech equipment (especially ships and aircraft) for the Royal Navy, which is worth tens of billions of pounds to the UK economy and creates export opportunity for British businesses, sustaining jobs not just in the traditional shipyards but also in contractors, sub-contractors and support services as well.

The ripples of that work spread widely – 800 apprentices have started their careers on the Queen Elizabeth-class carrier programme, and such skills and technological expertise cannot simply be reinvented in a crisis; they must be sustained and developed to protect a vital sovereign asset.

When viewed in this context, the Royal Navy is not a security luxury. It is a valuable national necessity that pays for itself, and more.

Another facet of so-called 'soft power' is the delivery of aid – alongside its sister Services and other government departments Royal Navy personnel have in recent times been helping to



● First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas (left) meets Service and civilian personnel at HMS Sultan

A new political landscape has opened up fresh opportunities for the Royal Navy in the coming decades. Mike Gray reports.

defeat the Ebola virus in Africa, rescuing Filipino communities devastated by a typhoon and searching for the missing Malaysian airliner in the southern Indian Ocean.

Alongside humanitarian help at home – remember the floods in England less than two years ago? – the Navy also helps coastal nations develop their own capabilities with advice, training and joint exercises.

But it is the fighting ability of the Royal Navy – 'hard power' – that is the force's *raison d'être*.

Security in home waters and around Britain's overseas territories and Commonwealth partners is often unseen and unnoticed – take undersea cables.

The technology might be old (the first submarine telegraph cables were laid in the mid-Victorian era) but today more than 95 per cent of all intercontinental digital and internet traffic travels not via satellites but through these underwater cables.

Such vital arteries, carrying the lifeblood of commerce and communication, need to be protected just as much as gas rigs.

And the 21st Century technology carried in these cables is also uppermost in Naval planners' minds as the threat of cyber attack matures – a problem for industrialists as much as the military.

So, far from diminishing, maritime security challenges continue to evolve and multiply.

The recent Russian military resurgence has brought the irreducible requirement for credible security into sharp focus.

President Putin has not been coy in reminding the world that Russia is a nuclear power, armed with nuclear weapons. And, close to home, his forces are busy probing UK defences too...

Within that turbulent context the UK emerges as still very much a major global player, and the government has set a course for the Royal Navy to deliver the only two permanent pillars of strategic responsibility in UK defence – continuous at sea deterrence and continuous carrier capability.

The former, now in its 47th uninterrupted year, has always been a subject of heated debate, but for the Navy – while it remains a government policy –

the task is to get on and deliver it, properly, and with no ifs or buts.

The latter sees a genuine strategic asset available to political leaders, and as such the new Queen Elizabeth-class carriers are not Royal Navy assets, nor even defence assets – they are national assets, commanded by the Navy, operated with the Army and RAF and facilitated through international agreements with the Americans and the French.

The American dimension was highlighted by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas at a speech at Chatham House last month.

"Between us, we own one of the most fundamental and consistent partnerships that has bound the United Kingdom and the United States together so tightly over the past 75 years," said the admiral.

"There are few areas where our strategic interests are more natural, or our global interests more aligned, than at sea."

Looking to the future, Admiral Zambellas said that the maritime partnership "is about to become even closer and stronger, in part because of the sustained investment that the Royal Navy is receiving in equipment and capability, but also because of the direct practical and spiritual support we've had from the US Navy for our own maritime journey."

The admiral spoke of work being done to support the Combined Strategic Narrative, signed at the end of last year, which covers five areas of work over the next 15 years, including the regeneration of the UK's carrier strike capability and the closer coordination of future carrier operations.

Greater opportunities for personnel exchanges and mutual investment in technology to allow seamless operations and eliminate wasteful duplication of effort are also on the agenda.

One example cited by Admiral Zambellas is the Common Missile Compartment that will be at the heart of both the Royal Navy's successor to the Trident submarines and the US Navy's next generation of ballistic missile submarines.

The aim, he said, is that "we are designing and deploying naval forces to be more than interoperable. From the outset we aim to be integrated, working in unison, not in tandem."

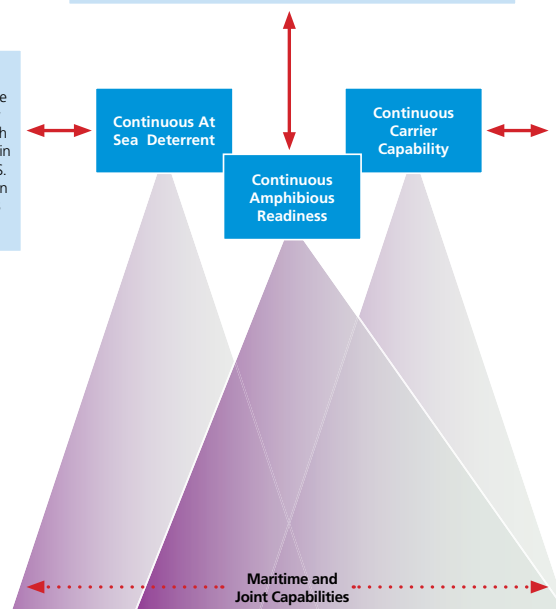
HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales, the largest ships ever built for the Royal Navy, will each be able to act as the beating heart of our nation's strategic armada, the Joint Expeditionary Force, able to deter enemies and provide comfort to friends.

The ships will provide a safe base for humanitarian relief operations, with enough storage space to make a real difference to lives.

A high readiness world class maritime force of shipping, marines and joint enablers specialised in operations in the cluttered littoral areas of the globe. Highly flexible, contributing and enabling across the spectrum of operations. The capability benefits from long standing relationships with the US, Netherlands and French.

A political instrument for the deterrence of the most extreme threats to the UK. Enabled by special intelligence and through the national nuclear enterprise in close collaboration with the US. A significant NATO contribution offered by only 3 of the 28 alliance members.

A globally employable national defence level capability, enabled through strategic US and French partnership. A highly adaptable capability, spanning Humanitarian Aid to warfighting, able to capitalise upon Access, Basing and Overflight freedoms which will be positioned firmly at the heart of the Joint Expeditionary Force.



● Three RN 'pillars' of strategic responsibility and core capability

And they will be tools of diplomacy and commerce, supporting British diplomats and commercial interests around the globe.

The announcement by the government at last autumn's NATO summit in Wales that both carriers will be brought into service strengthens the nation's hand – carrier power will be available to British politicians at all times; when one is in refit, the other stands ready.

The Royal Navy has a third crucial capability, based around the peerless Royal Marines Corps and their specialised shipping – continuous amphibious readiness.

Amphibious specialists and their support operate as part of the Maritime Task Group, on call to deal with a crisis around the world.

Recent examples include the delivery of aid and succour following a natural disaster, such as in the Philippines, or the evacuation of Britons from a dangerous environment – and there are some 5.5 million Brits living overseas.

And while the instruments to deliver these three core imperatives are obvious – ballistic missile submarines, aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships – the vital supporting cast must not be forgotten.

Astute-class submarines,

Type 45 destroyers, the future Type 26 frigates, minehunters, tankers, supply ships – all have vital, interlocking roles to play in keeping the cutting edge sharp and available, and all must be credible to make the deterrent effect credible.

Cutting corners – less-capable escort ships, perhaps, or reduced training for commandos – would undermine that basic credibility upon which the very essence of deterrence depends.

That also means investing in new technology; as computing power redoubles every year or so, the possibility of not just exploiting winning opportunities, but also perhaps removing people from harm's way, becomes greater.

And the Royal Navy never forgets the bottom line – it has to do the job efficiently as well as effectively; the hard-pressed taxpayer expects nothing less.

With the ships we have, and with the people we have, we easily out-perform other comparable navies.

The equation is simple. For 23,000 sailors and 7,000 marines, no other nation gets what our nation gets from its Navy. Our closest comparator gets only half the sea time from its units.

The ships we operate are capable of a wide range of tasks, from war-fighting to supporting industry or providing aid, and

they are built to last – frigates have a working life of some 30 years, and the new carriers are designed to run for half a century or so.

We need to attract more people, especially the technical personnel who make up half the Royal Navy.

And under Defence Reform, changes are driving efficiency – more and more financial responsibility is being delegated to the single Service front-line commands, which means it is in our best interest to spend wisely.

The penalty for falling short would be fewer or less-capable ships, aircraft or marines.

As Admiral Zambellas said in his Chatham House speech on our American partnership: "Mark my words. When the first of our new carriers, HMS Queen Elizabeth, deploys on her first mission in a few years, with fifth generation fighters and remotely piloted air systems embarked, she will scotch at a stroke any talk of Britain's retreat from the world."

"So, for anyone still questioning Britain's willingness to protect her interests and shoulder her responsibilities in the world, we have given you an answer."

"A Royal Navy on the rise. More technologically advanced, more credible in the eyes of our most important partner, than ever before."

Explosive Warship 'adopts sails'

I WAS told this story many years ago when I was in the Royal Navy.

An elderly gentleman was giving an interview on his 100th birthday. The interviewer asked him what was the secret of looking so young and living so long?

"Well," said the old man. "When I was a young lad in the Navy, I served in the Far East."

"One day while ashore I went into a herbalist shop, just to have a look around."

"The herbalist asked if I would like to know the secret of old age? I said yes of course. He said it's this: take one teaspoon of gunpowder in my tea all my life. That's the secret."

A few years later the old man died. He left behind eight children, 16 grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and a 56ft crater where the crematorium used to be.

T Bloom
Kings Lynn

Mining a rich seam

FRED Copley's coal experience jogged a memory.

During the 1960s I was No1 of HMS Barnard, another Bar-class coal burner.

One day the Coxswain brought a newcomer to see me because AB (fictitious) Jones refused to work with the chef.

I explained that in this friendly ship we all worked together, crossing departmental lines when necessary.

Jones was adamant he was a seaman not a chef.

"Well," said I "The engineers are trimming today, would you like to help them?"

"Yes." He didn't realise that trimming necessitated shoveling tons of coal from one side to the other.

Later that day the Coxswain informed me that Jones was happily working in the galley.

Doug Barlow
Emsworth

Uniform pipe

FURTHER to the two letters in June's *Navy News*.

As a lad at HMS Ganges in the 1950s, I was under the impression that No.8s was action working dress and No.4s were bell bottoms and jumper but with no collar or lanyard.

The pipe was "hands to clean into night clothing."

Alan Clayton
Ripon

I THOUGHT you might be amused at the picture I took of HMS Middleton during her visit to Lerwick in the Shetlands. It looks like she is displaying her "auxiliary propulsion system."

She was alongside with the Royal Norwegian Navy Training Ship Statsraad Lehmbukl tied up beyond her.

Keith Brill
(Ex POSA)
Inverness



'Exotic trip' put me off volunteering

IN THE 1990s I was drafted to Captain Fleet Maintenance Portsmouth as a JMEM2.

Every morning at eight the chief stoker would enter the mess room and pass round a register where we would tick off our own names and our oppo's names who weren't there due to hangovers etc.

The passing round of the register used to take a while back then as there were around 150 stokers based at CFM.

Some mornings the chief stoker used to select a handful of LMEMs and MEMs to say how do you fancy flying out to somewhere like Bahrain, Australia, Singapore etc for ten-12 days to assist with essential maintenance on a ship.

I was never selected to go and when the stokers returned they said they got the job done in a couple of days and spent the rest of the time on the beach or sight-seeing. I was always so jealous.

One morning the chief stoker asked for volunteers to go on a jolly. Quick as a flash I raised my arm.

The next day I found myself travelling out to the North Sea to do an aircraft change on a carrier.

We completed the job in a couple of days but they were unable to fly me back to shore because of rough weather.

I found myself stuck there for a week, helping the ship's company clean the ship.

When I returned to CFM,



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tippie to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Adam Dunkley

I found out that the day after I volunteered, the chief stoker selected a large group of stokers to fly to Dubai and help with a diesel generator change on a frigate.

They did the work in three days and had ten days on the beach.

Another group flew to Singapore to carry out a turbine change on a destroyer, again they had plenty of free time.

I never volunteered for anything else during my time in the Navy.

Adam 'Dunks' Dunkley
Ex-LMEM
Leicestershire



● I wanted to send you this picture I recently found of my dad CPO Brian Humphreys. He was the last sailmaker in the Royal Navy. He worked in HMS Vernon, Portsmouth, for many years and sadly passed away in April 2007.

Jo Cooper, Hampshire

Longest tow of the war

HAVING recently returned to UK from Australia and having been a *Navy News* reader for many years, I would like to point out that when the BPF or Task Force 57 was involved in Operation Iceberg, the invasion at Okinawa, ships other than the carriers came under attack.

I was serving in HMS Ulster on April 1 1945. We were on the outer screen and were attacked by a Japanese plane, suffering severe damage from two near-miss bombs.

After the order to abandon ship was cancelled we awaited assistance, which came after several hours in the shape of the Kiwi cruiser Gambia, which took us in tow to Leyte.

The tow was one of the longest of the war – almost a week. Finally making Leyte, we went into dry dock and the damage was evident, a great hole from the waterline to the keel. Why the ship didn't break in two is a credit to the builders.

An Aussie ship Kalgoorlie buried our dead and after several weeks the ship was seaworthy again and we sailed back to Sydney.

Most of the crew were put ashore and scattered on different drafts. A great pity.

Alan Lee Potts
Nottingham

Instructor loses out

IT'S 1966, and as a new entry "baby Tiff" I went through all the usual stuff, including drill.

Our class drill instructor was CPOGI Gaffney, almost at retirement age. He had served in WW2.

Came the day we did double march. OK so far, then it was "Change step at the double."

Chiefly duly demonstrated, but us being evil buggers, sensing an opportunity: "Chief ... didn't quite get that, can you show us again."

An encore, followed by another dose of the same.

Poor Chief, he was quite under the weather, puffing and blowing, and we had a very long stand easy while he recovered.

He told us he had been torpedoed three times on the same day in the South China Sea during WW2.

But we clubbed together and bought him a lighter when we won the drill competition part.

Dave Clark
St Albans

Chance to showcase Naval aviation

ONE of my life's regrets is not having been in the Royal Navy, and now in my 70s I suppose it is too late.

But I enjoy reading *Navy News* and keeping abreast of the regeneration of the Navy in this decade.

When the Queen Elizabeth enters Portsmouth Harbour in early 2017, I expect she may have a mock-up F-35B on the ski-jump as at her launching ceremony last summer.

Would it be possible for one of the remaining Swordfish aircraft to fly onto the carrier during its voyage south from

Scotland, ie the English Channel? The plane could then be displayed at the stern of the ship before she enters Portsmouth, thereby showing the span of Naval aviation history insofar as is possible today.

The Swordfish could be moved to the hangar deck later when the ship is in port. During QE's work-up programme in the Channel, the plane could fly back to Yeovilton.

It is just a thought.

BR Bacon
Bognor Regis



● The F-35B mock-up at the naming ceremony



LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



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● Royal Marine reservists took part in heavy machine-gun firings at Lulworth; Below right, Reservists gather up the empty shells

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon, CTCRM

Marines enjoy rattling great time with 50 cal

HAVE some.

Royal Marines reservists send bursts of tracer from their heavy machine-gun streaking through the July night on the Lulworth ranges.

The latest group of RMR heavy machine-gunners completed their training with some live shoots at the Dorset military camp, hammering away with their weapons by day and night.

The 0.5 inch calibre heavy machine-guns – known as ‘50 cal’ by the Royal Marines’ Anti-Tank specialists (who are themselves known as ‘Tankies’) – spew

out up to 635 rounds a minute at targets more than a mile away.

It takes three men to set up and fire typically – although it can be loaded and fired by a single green beret if necessary.

Gunners are taught to strip and assemble the 50 cals, which trace their history back to the armament on the legendary Spitfire, then spend hours going through drills ensuring they can handle these heavy weapons – the gun alone weighs 38kg (6st) sans ammo – proficiently.

They are taught armoured fighting

vehicle recognition so they know which targets they can engage – and the effects they will have on those targets.

And after all the training and instruction, the gunnery funnery, sending rounds into targets at over 2,000 miles an hour... or more than two-and-a-half times the speed of sound.

“This live firing is the high point of the course for me,” said 25-year-old Mne Jonathan Atkinson, by day an osteopath in Cheltenham.

“This is what it’s all about, going on the range and using live ammunition.

“It’s been two years since I first joined the RMR and I absolutely love it. I’ve done things that my friends who aren’t in the military would never experience. The camaraderie you get is unmatched in any other profession.

“I was originally looking at going into the regulars and then I chose a degree at university which is very vocational and I realised if I didn’t use the skills from the degree I would lose that skill set.

“The RMR was a perfect transition into a military career for me alongside the skills I gained at university.”



Linguist tells of pride at mission

A ROYAL Navy Reservist has spoken of his pride in taking part in the migrant rescue operation.

Social Care Manager Ruairi Holohan, a Sub Lt in the RNR, spent five weeks aboard HMS Bulwark where he spoke French and Arabic to the thousands of migrants rescued by the Navy.

He was among the first of the sailors on board who would meet the migrants on the Royal Marines’ landing crafts which would sail out to transport them from their boats to Bulwark.

“Once on board the ship I would use my language skills to process the migrants and get the details required such as name, nationality, age and any minor injuries or illnesses,” said Ruairi, who attends HMS Hibernia, the Royal Naval Unit in Northern Ireland.

“On a typical rescue we would speak to in excess of 1,000 migrants. From there I would go to the med tent to interpret for the medics dealing with those who were sick or injured.”

HMS Bulwark deployed at short notice on May 5 with



● Sub Lt Ruairi Holohan helped thousands of migrants during his deployment aboard HMS Bulwark in the Mediterranean

the immediate mandate to save lives. During her deployment she saved more than 3,000 people and was at the forefront of the search-and-rescue mission.

Although Ruairi was deployed as a linguist, his civilian training formed a key part of his role as he also became involved in delivering primary social care to the migrants.

“At home I work in residential units and family assessment centres,” he said.

“The average transit time to Italy was 30 hours so I spent the time helping coordinate the care for the families and those who were injured.

“We had to care for several unaccompanied children, something which I do in my regular day job where I’ve worked in residential units for unaccompanied minors.

“And my baby bottle-making skills were also called into action as we had infants onboard, including one three-week-old baby.

“It was a brilliant experience. The chance to put all the skills I have learnt into practice during a live and high-profile operation is something I will never forget.

“I am extremely privileged to have been given the opportunity to help so many people in need.”

Flying Fox’s highest fliers

LEADING Hand Bill Jackson was awarded HMS Flying Fox’s highest annual honour, the Webber Plate.

Bill has been a Royal Naval Reservist for 24 years and has recently completed the Senior Rates Leadership Course.

Bill, who works for HMRC, said: “There may only be a few born leaders, but it can still be learned. I’d argue that joining the Reserves can give you leadership training and, through practical experience in the Reserves, provide the leadership competence that HMRC is looking for.”

AB John Orzel, 30, and AB Andy McNeil, 21, shared the Bristol-based unit’s Best Able Seamen Award while AB Josh Llewellyn, 24, and AB Olivia Angwin, shared the unit’s best recruits award.

Midshipman Nick Hand was awarded the Operational Service Medal (OSM) for his time working in Afghanistan as an MoD Civil Servant and as such is now entitled to wear the medal on his Royal Naval uniform. Lt Cdr Steve Yates was awarded a clasp to his Volunteer Reserve Service Medal to mark 30 years of Naval Service.

PASS IT ON! WE NEED YOUR EXPERIENCE IN RECRUITING



CAREERS ADVISERS

Flag Officer Sea Training is currently seeking RN and RM WOs, Senior Rates and SNCO Service leavers and ex-regulars, (those that left service under 2 years), to work in Armed Forces Career Offices around the UK.

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"I AM delighted to see the progress that continues to be made by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Over the past year I have been pleased to see that the charity has refocused its aims around those at the heart of the organisation: our sailors, marines and their families.

This has led to a mission which puts an emphasis on working with, and through, others to value and support serving and former members of the Naval Service, and sets the benchmark of ambition for a family of charities that have come together to achieve this shared vision.

By working together and harnessing each other's strengths, the charity will achieve greater impact over a wider community and keep our beneficiaries at the centre of our work. This is a powerful message to all those whose support we seek.

During the last 12 months we have celebrated both the 350th birthday of the Royal Marines and the 275th anniversary of the founding of the Royal Naval Benevolent Society for Officers, now a significant part of the charity. Over this time I have been reminded of the historical ties that bind us, which should help us understand how to be there for more people.

The work of the charity makes a real and significant difference and, as patron, I encourage all who have an interest in the Naval Service to provide whatever help you can to ensure our continued success.

*The Princess Royal,
Patron, Royal Navy and
Royal Marines Charity*

Global impact

A GRANT of £11,740 enabled Service families across the UK to access high-quality sports and activity programmes that inspire and encourage children. Kings Camp school holiday programmes for 4- to 17-year-olds took place at HMS Temeraire, HMS Collingwood, Clyde and Devonport Naval Bases.

■ Our grant of £20,000 bought a new motor home, allowing Service personnel and their families at Yeovilton to enjoy subsidised breaks and holidays.

■ Our £270 contribution to HMS Wildfire enabled 18 Royal Naval Reservists to take part in a tour of Belgium to mark the conflicts of World War 1.

■ Our grant of £3,000 helped mark the start of a new era for the Royal Navy with the official handover of the 'Jungle' Merlin helicopter to the Commando Helicopter Force in a formal ceremony at RAF Benson.

■ To make working life abroad that little bit easier we gave Gibraltar Squadron a £423 grant to buy a TV and sound-system for their crew area.

Working together, achieving more

THROUGH our work – and that of our Group charities (right) – we gave £7.6m to provide financial support, help and advice and, in cases of hardship and distress, life-changing essentials to our beneficiaries.

We distributed more money, and made a greater and more profound impact, than in any other year in the history of the charity.

Our support is truly 'through life', and in 2014 we gave £3.7m to care for our beneficiaries, from children to the frail and old.

Our major grant funding to other charities enables them to provide direct care to those in



ROYAL MARINES
CHARITABLE TRUST FUND



RNOC
ROYAL NAVY
OFFICERS' CHARITY



THE GROUP

NAVAL SERVICE
SPORTS CHARITY

need, and through the Royal Navy Officers' Charity and the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund we provide direct help to individuals who fall on difficult times.

We also gave £3.9m to provide assistance to

Naval Service personnel and their dependants.

Our grant-making aims to ease the pressure that life in the Royal Navy or Royal Marines can bring.

Last year was an extraordinary year, with a spike in grants made in support of the 350th birthday of the Royal Marines, where we supported Commando units in marking key anniversaries and as they disengaged from active operations.

Significant gifts from major donors for specific restricted projects also increased in Service grants to higher than usual levels.



THE Naval Service has been central to Britain's past and is critical to Britain's future.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity has a clear vision of a world in which our sailors and marines and their families are valued and supported, for life. It's a simple message and over the next five years we will build on the great progress made to date, which has seen us reach more beneficiaries through our increased grants programme.

With that clear goal in mind we will focus on taking our strategic framework to a reality that changes lives on the ground. This will require excellent operational execution and close working with our charity partners, with the Royal Navy and with our supporters and donors.

We recognise and respect the diversity in our world and we will build our future based on three core precepts: excellence in fundraising aligned to tight financial discipline, world-class grant-making and distribution of funds and the very best in relationship management. Achieving this ambitious agenda will enable us to make life better for our beneficiaries and will enhance the brand of the charity and the naval charitable sector around the country.

I am delighted to join the charity at this exciting time and very much look forward to leading the board through the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

*Bill Thomas, Chairman,
Royal Navy and Royal
Marines Charity*

Providing support right through life

WE support elderly veterans in care homes and the Service personnel of today, who protect our country 365 days a year.

We also care for their families – partners and children – when they cannot.

"Our focus for giving is as much on the veteran community as it is on the front line," said Admiral Sir Jonathon Band GCB DL, President, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

"In the UK alone, there are 800,000 people in our beneficiary group. We exist to support them – today, tomorrow and for life."

Our partnership with Greenwich Hospital provides funding for specialist charities that deliver essential services on our behalf.

That was the case with the



Larkin family (pictured above).

CPO Ian Larkin has been in the Royal Navy for 33 years. He is a full-time Reservist based at Devonport on HMS Turbulent.

He and his wife Gill have twin teenage sons, Edward and

William, both of whom have cerebral palsy and have been supported by the charity.

William is the more severely affected of the two sons; he has quadriplegic cerebral palsy, which affects all muscle groups in the body.

He is an electric wheelchair user, requires a high level of support and attends a special school in Plymouth.

At home, William had been using a hospital bed but he really wanted a normal bed, that would make his room feel homely and more comfortable.

A SSAFA case worker identified William's needs and approached the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund for help.

Together they provided – with funding from the Royal Navy

and Royal Marines Charity and its major donor, Greenwich Hospital – the Larkin family with a special profiling bed, which is perfect for William's needs and more appropriate for the home environment.

Hugh Player, Director of Greenwich Hospital, said: "We are proud to support those who serve, or have served, and their dependants."

"That is our charitable responsibility and our aim is to do more, and in more ways, for more people, in the coming years."

The work of these charities is as immediate as providing emergency housing, clothing and food for people living in hardship, or it can be as forward-leaning as to fund equipment, medical bills and respite breaks for families with ill children.

Valuing the Service family

WE ARE here for the entire Naval Service – sailors and marines, full-timers and Reserves. We exist to support them; the 30,000 people, who defend, protect and serve our country.

"From the day new entrants walk through the gates of HMS Raleigh, BRNC Dartmouth or the Commando Training Centre, Lymington they become part of our world," explained Robert Robson, Chief Executive, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

We support our current Force by leveraging our strategic

partnership with the Royal Navy. Together we have defined large scale, high impact and desperately needed projects that will make a positive difference to the Service.

These include a £850,000 refurbishment of the WO's and SR's Mess in HMS Sultan and the renovation of buildings at HMS Nelson, improving accommodation so that families who normally live apart can spend quality time together when personnel are based in Portsmouth.

In early 2015, we received funding for both these projects

from the government and its allocation of Libor fines to charities.

HMS Tireless was one of the deployed units to benefit in 2014.

"After a challenging running period, including an extension to our deployment and involvement in the international search for Malaysia Airlines flight MH370, the opportunity for an unexpected stand-down period was very welcome. Your funding enabled the ship's company to enjoy a typical Australian barbecue in Perth," said the CO of the submarine.

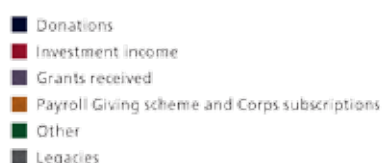
We also work at the smaller end of the spectrum, to boost morale and ease the pressure that life in the Service can bring.

During 2014, our team awarded 642 minor amenity grants – those less than £5,000 – which enabled quick access to funds for service personnel, helping to make a positive difference where the public purse cannot.

We generate income from a number of sources

Our voluntary income is raised through the donations we receive from fundraisers and high-net worth individuals, from the Royal Navy's Payroll Giving scheme, the Royal Marines' Corps Subscriptions and from other activities and events.

The remainder of our income is generated from our investment portfolio and from grants received, such as those of our partner Greenwich Hospital.



**For every £1 spent we allocate 78.2p on charitable activities
16.5p on raising funds
5.3p on running the charity**

The figures are extracted from our Annual Report and Accounts 2014 which can be downloaded from the Charity Commission website charitycommission.gov.uk



Thank you for vital backing

IN 2014, our supporters made a significant difference to the charity and Naval Service family. Thank you for your generosity and goodwill.

We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel, who provide valuable funds through their Platinum Award-winning Payroll Giving scheme and through their inspiring fundraising challenges.

Our band of donors and corporate partners continues to grow and without your help much of the support we deliver to our beneficiaries simply would not be possible. Thanks also must be given to the Gosling Foundation for its £250,000 donation for the Corps family in celebration of the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines.

To all of our valued friends your continued support is vital and very much appreciated. If you want to support our cause, please make a donation – through payroll giving or single/regular donation – by joining one of our fundraising challenges, volunteering, or supporting us through your workplace.

Thank you.

Duo march in memory of young Joe

TWO sailors from HMS Collingwood walked a marathon from Salisbury to Winchester in support of Naomi House and Jack's Place.

CPOs Stu Young and Al Gower from the Weapon Engineering Training Group signed up to take part in the Clarendon Way Walk; a 26-mile walk across Wiltshire organised by Naomi House.

The sailors' reason for participation in the event and fundraising efforts is to express gratitude for the excellent palliative care that Al's son (Stu's nephew), Joe, five, received before he passed away in 2013.

Al said: "We just wanted to give something in return. They gave and still give support to our family during this difficult time."

It was the second time that Stu and Al have taken part in the walk, but this year they were slightly more prepared for the arduous journey from Salisbury Cathedral to Winchester Cathedral.

Joining the duo were family and friends including Al's brother, CPO Mark Gower,



● CPOs Al Gower and Stu Young

Picture: Keith Woodland

who is currently based at HMS Excellent.

More than 1,000 people took to the Wiltshire countryside for the event, which is in its ninth year.

Joe's Uncle Stu said: "We wanted to raise money to ensure that Naomi House and Jack's Place can continue to help ill

children and bereft families long into the future."

The team were supported by the Warrant Officers' and Senior Rates Mess at Collingwood, who sponsored them £10 for each mile they walked.

Collectively, they were hoping to raise £1,500 for Naomi House and Jack's Place.

Tonka goes to town

TWO sailors from HMS Collingwood finished in fifth place at the 'Final Mission' European 4x4 Rally in aid of Help for Heroes (H4H).

The rally, organised by ex-military off-road enthusiasts Keith and Tim Bowen, was themed in commemoration of the D-Day landings and saw participants follow the route taken by the US 101st Airborne Division and Allied Forces during WW2.

POs Mike Sawdon and Ash Pearce, along with Mike's fiancée Lucy Weigel formed Team 'Senior Service'. They joined 45 other teams who set off from Littlecote House Hotel on June 13 for a 12-day, 2,000-mile journey across seven countries.

In 'Tonka', the team's Land Rover Defender, the crew of



● Mike Sawdon, Lucy Weigel and Ash Pearce in front of Tonka

three took turns at orienteering, driving and spotting.

Journeying across Europe, often driving for 12 hours a day, the team navigated tough unfamiliar varying terrain to reach check points and took part in daily challenges to achieve additional points.

The programme allowed

teams plenty of down time to visit many military historical and poignant sites on route including Commonwealth War Grave sites, the Thiepval Memorial and John Frost's Bridge (*A Bridge Too Far*). Those involved also took part in a Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres, where the children laid a wreath.

Tough test for Woody

A ROYAL Navy officer from Portsmouth will be motorcycling from Hampshire to Gloucestershire to Sussex to raise money for Blind Veterans UK, the national charity for blind and vision-impaired ex-Servicemen and women.

Lt Cdr Richard "Woody" Woodbridge, 48, is set to tackle Ride for Life Beyond Sight Loss, the charity's annual motorcycling event, for the second time.

He said: "It was a great event last year, with lots of new people to meet and the usual camaraderie between bikers. The riding was enjoyable, taking me through places I hadn't visited before, and the weather helped big time because it was sunny and warm throughout."

The Ride for Life Beyond Sight Loss will be the first time Woody has done two big rides in consecutive days since breaking his leg in four places.

He will be riding up to Moreton-in-Marsh from Portsmouth for the start of the ride. After staying overnight locally, he will ride 140 miles to Brighton before returning to Portsmouth that evening.

Woody said: "Although the ride is shorter this

year (approx 200 miles over the day), as I'm still recovering from a broken leg it will be a greater personal challenge. Over two days I will have ridden over 400 miles, the most riding I'll have done in a short period since walking and riding again."

The marine engineer based at Navy Command on Whale Island, decided to raise money for Blind Veterans UK after meeting veterans supported by the charity at the Blind Veterans UK annual summer camp held at HMS Sultan. He is also a member of the Royal Navy Motor Cycle Club in Portsmouth.

Woody has served in Bahrain, the Middle East, the Baltic, Mediterranean and off the coast of Africa. He will be tackling Ride for Life Beyond Sight Loss on his Harley Davidson Sportster.

He added: "As a Naval officer, I feel that raising money for Blind Veterans UK is a great way to look after our own, so to speak."

The event kicks off at Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, at 9am on August 15 and ends with a BBQ at the Brighton Centre later that day.

To support Woody's fundraising visit: www.justgiving.com/Richard-Woodbridge1/



● Greig Phillips wanted to see how far he had recovered

Heroes ride to help

A team of charity cyclists, some of them recovering troops, cycled 250 miles from Plymouth to London in aid of the charity Help for Heroes.

About 30 cyclists, two on hand bikes, left the Naval Service Recovery Centre Endeavour at Devonport with their support team.

They were part of a record number of 100 wounded Heroes, collectively covering 18,500 miles, that led the largest major gathering of Afghanistan and Iraq veteran cyclists since the end of the Afghanistan conflict.

Many of the wounded cycled from the South West and they were backed by over 1,000 charity supporters cycling from all four points of the compass to raise vital funds for Help for Heroes.

The Hero Ride West 280

covered the miles in five days before joining up with the other cyclists at Windsor Racecourse.

Help for Heroes Band of Brother member Greig Phillips, 34, was on a routine patrol with RAF Regiment in Afghanistan in 2009 when he stepped on an IED. He lost his right leg below the knee in the blast and was quickly flown back to Selly Oak hospital in Birmingham for treatment.

When he moved home to Torpoint, he was one of the first to benefit from the newly-built Help for Heroes Recovery Centre in Plymouth and has recently started a job working in the Help for Heroes Sports Recovery Team.

"I signed up to Hero Ride to challenge myself to see how far I've come in the recovery process," he said.

Charity Snippets

■ THE annual Supercar Siege raised £24,000 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund.

A Merlin Mk3 from 846 NAS joined more than 600 cars for the event at Leeds Castle in Kent. The siege also featured some of the world's most exotic cars, a Lat Ferrari, Zonda, Koenigsegg Agera, as well as a KITT Knight Rider and the official HASBRO Transformer Bumblebee.

■ Lomond Mountain Rescue Team, based in Drymen, received a donation of £3,000 from Royal Navy engineers at HMNB Clyde.

The money was raised by members of the Faslane-based Quart Club during their annual charity dinner and raffle held in March.

■ STAFF from Hair At Mandy's at HMS Collingwood are marking turning 21 with a year of fundraising events.

First up was a guess the name of the teddy in the Warrant Officers' and Senior Rates' Mess. The workers are supporting Combat Stress and the RNRMC.

■ HMS Sutherland joined forces with comedian Jim Davidson to help veteran Service personnel with a charity cycle ride from Plymouth to Scotland and back.

A team of eight sailors, including the ship's captain Cdr Stephen Anderson, began a 1,600-mile ride from the ship in Devonport, Plymouth, to Dunrobin Castle in Sutherland in aid of Care after Combat.

■ THE Bristol Branch of the Royal Naval Engineer's Quart Club (RNEQC) donated £800 to St Peter's Hospice.

The money was raised through various activities held by both the Bristol and Bath branches of the club during 2014-15.

■ A UNIQUE exhibition, which brought a sense of the sea back to some of the UK's veteran mariners, was organised by the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society.

The exhibition, which took place during Seafarers Awareness Week, marked the launch of its third annual maritime photography competition.

■ THE unique role played by the Armed Forces charity SSAFA in supporting families on the Home Front during WW1 has led to a special partnership with Suttons Seeds.

The Devon-based gardening firm have launched one-off packs of field poppy seeds to mark the WW1 Centenary.

For each £1.99 packet sold, a donation of £1 will be made to SSAFA.

Visit www.suttons.co.uk

Supporting Children

of Royal Navy and Royal Marines (serving and ex-serving) who are IN NEED, HARDSHIP or DISTRESS



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Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen



● Owen McCartney, from Energy Coast UTC, in the Marine Engineering control centre of Type 45 destroyer HMS Defender

Raising young engineers

THE Royal Navy is playing its part in trying to overcome the nationwide shortage of young people choosing a career in engineering and science.

Just over a year ago, in June 2014, following discussions between First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas and Lord Baker of Dorking, Chairman of the Baker Dearing Educational Trust, the Navy's ranking officer directed that the Senior Service should establish a University Technical College project team to support the development and promotion of UTCs.

In a letter sent out across the Navy, Admiral Zambellas wrote: "As a former apprentice I have been concerned about the lack of young people moving into engineering and science at school and we are seeing this play out in our challenge to recruit and retain Engineering Technicians and Engineer Officers.

"I have taken a view that we have a significant part to play in overcoming this, both to assist in our challenge but also for the good of the nation as a whole."

The Royal Navy has now formed affiliations with five UTCs – South Wiltshire, Bristol, Plymouth, Derby and Energy Coast (Workington, Cumbria).

And in a significant period of activity since last summer the RN project team has not only been at the forefront of the successful bid to raise the standard over Portsmouth's own UTC, but has also enjoyed a number of important initiatives with existing UTCs.

In March this year the inaugural RN-hosted UTC visits to Portsmouth took place.

Students from Bristol, Plymouth and Energy Coast, in two separate age groups, spent a week each with the Navy, getting a taste of life in the Senior Service – a potential employer to add to the decision process when considering their future career options.

The Year 10/11 and Sixth Form students were given a unique opportunity to learn more about the diverse roles available to an engineer in the RN, gain an understanding of the rich history of the Navy and get an insight into the leadership and management skills they will develop should they join.

Owen McCartney, 16, from Energy Coast UTC, said: "It's been a good week that has shown us the type of jobs that the Navy does and also how it all works.

"We all chose to come on this visit because each of us has an interest in maybe joining up, and this week has given us a very real perspective on what to expect."

Capt Andy Cree, who is leading the Portsmouth UTC project, said: "This is a new partnership for the Royal Navy, so having these, the first colleges, come to visit has been an important milestone for us.

"We have been able to develop strong links with these talented young students, show them what the role of a Royal Navy engineer entails, and now they have gone away to consider whether this is the career for them."

In tandem with taking forward the affiliation programme the UTC project team is leading the project steering group to create a UTC in Portsmouth, with the City Council and the University of Portsmouth taking leading roles.

The maritime defence industry, including the Royal Navy, recognised the need for a UTC in Portsmouth and, as part of First Sea Lord's initial brief, the project team headed up a consortium to successfully bid to open the city's own UTC.

It is expected to open in September 2017.

For more information, visit www.UTCPortsmouth.org for details of the curriculum, admissions policy or to take part in the statutory consultation process taking place this autumn.

There are currently 30 UTCs operating across the country for students aged 14-19, with another 20 starting up by next year.

Hands-on training receives thumbs up

THE first group of junior engineers have completed hands-on at-sea training – achieving aboard HMS Northumberland in 12 weeks what previously could take 12 months.

Thirty engineering technicians joined the Devonport-based frigate as part of the new training units formed in Plymouth and Portsmouth to fast-track engineers ready for front-line duties with the Fleet.

With opportunities for at-sea instruction limited by the availability of vessels – and with the never-ending need to supply fresh blood, Engineering Training Squadrons have been established.

They are using Northumberland and her sister Kent to give dedicated, concentrated, practical instruction, cramming all that an ET2 needs to progress to ET1 into just under three months.

Each ship will take up to 30 men and women – 15 each from Sultan (marine) and Collingwood (weapon) – to sea under the tutelage of specialist instructors and working alongside the already-qualified and experienced members of the frigate's ship's companies.

The inaugural group filed up Northumberland's gangway in April... and filed off it on July 10, having spent a few months patrolling around the UK and taking part in several high-profile events such as the Tall Ships race in Belfast, anniversary of the Royal Yacht Squadron off Cowes and bringing the Waterloo dispatch from Belgium to Britain as part of bicentennial commemorations.

"It's been the best experience of my Naval life so far," said ET Ben Brown, one of the newly-qualified engineers taking part in the pilot scheme.

"I feel that I've made a huge step forward in my engineering career."

ET Dan Coates added: "I made some great friends aboard Northumberland while gaining invaluable engineering experience. And the training staff from the Devonport squadron really helped me to build my confidence."

WO 'Bertie' Bassett, the senior marine engineer overseeing the 15 ET(ME)s on Northumberland, said the 12 weeks aboard the warship had provided "the perfect environment for our young engineers to launch their



careers."

He continued: "The benefits of this training are already evident – we're providing the Fleet with enthusiastic, confident and competent engineers.

"The opportunity for them to get hands-on experience will prove invaluable as part of their development as world-class engineers."

Passing on his experience to a new generation of weapon engineers was CPO Chris Nutbean.

He had put in his notice after nearly 30 months drafted to HMS Monmouth and the "usual push factors" such as lack of time at home and pay.

He was sold on the idea of the new training squadron, however. "I was completely taken in by the idea and discussed the notion of withdrawing my notice with my wife.

"She was onside and I've now happily fulfilled a sea draft embarked on Northumberland training 15 ETWEs."

For the Duke-class ship's company, it's allowed them to pass on their skills to the next generation.

"This is a brilliant way to train our young engineers and will clearly provide them with a huge stepping stone in their careers," said LET Simon Hampstead. "It will also benefit the Service in the long run."

● Northumberland's LET Brough shares his experience with trainee ET Shakeshaft and (below) some of the 30 junior engineers file up the T23's gangway

Pictures: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies



ET(ME) Kelvyn Vance said it had been "very nice to get some keen young engineers working in my part of the ship – they were always asking questions, wanting to learn and develop their engineering skills."

Lt Andrew Webster, the Devonport ETS' Officer in Charge, believes the initiative will provide the RN with "highly-motivated, professional ET1s who are keen to embark on their next step as engineers.

"The ETs can be proud of their accomplishments and development – particularly

completing their task books and boards within three months."

As Northumberland's first batch completed their training, the first group aboard HMS Kent are knuckling down in the early stages of their 12-week spell.

"They've received a warm welcome from Kent's ship's company and, with the additional training and oversight provided by the ETS staff, have the opportunity to make rapid progress in this early stage of their engineering career," said Lt Debbie Harmer, Lt Webster's counterpart in Portsmouth.

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Where to look

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190/15 Introduction of a Standardised ShipHaz Log
191/15 Honours and Awards in the Naval Service – 2015/16 Guidance
194/15 The Defence Learning Environment - Naval Service Virtual Learning Environment Support Service Portal
200/15 Paultons Park – Armed Forces Weekend
203/15 Removal of Group Head Conversion Course (GHCC) as a Pre-Promotion Requirement for CPOET(WE)
204/15 Engineering Technician Marine Engineering (ET(ME)) Career Development Journal (CDJ) V1.1 Update
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206/15 Revised Process for Streaming to Warfare Specialist Sub-Specialisation

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10-039 Royal Navy Judo Championships Sept 10

Champions wanted Shining knights earn two-night free break

Faraday

Portsmouth and Devonport.

Faraday champions will be nominated for every unit; they will – with the full support of Flotilla and waterfront engineering support staff – be at the forefront of pushing forward the Faraday culture and mindset.

The goal is to make these new initiatives the norm for all EGS personnel at the sharp end as well as those in training environments.

It's vital we all accept and adopt the 'thinking engineer' mindset. We must also place 'coaching and mentoring through practical experience' at the very heart of our onboard training. This will underpin the continued development of engineering excellence in the front line.

These changes are subtle and in many ways just a tweak of the tried-and-tested Royal Navy engineering ethos of 'grow our own'.

Your nominated Faraday champions will be able to show you the way and support all your efforts as we all take our first steps on this important journey. We need your help to ensure that these changes endure and that the future of our working environment is bright, inspiring and fulfilling for all.

Faraday as a programme will continue to look at ways and means to improve all areas to support EGS personnel, but for change to really take place all EGS personnel must play their part.

Any questions or comments, contact 93832 7441 or via e-mail navy_eng_spt-hum_cap_w01a. The Programme Faraday Intranet site can be found via the A-Z.

A ROYAL Marine bugler who made thousands of music lovers very 'happy', a commando gunner who pulled out all the stops, and a senior rating who breathed new life into HMS Iron Duke have all been rewarded with short holidays thanks to a new initiative.

Reward and recognition breaks are being introduced by Warrant Officer Naval Service WO1 Steve Cass to thank sailors and Royal Marines who go 'above and beyond' what's expected of them, earning a couple of nights away.

The China Fleet Country Club in Saltash and the Victory Services Club in London both responded to his requests for a limited number of vouchers – two nights for up to four people to accompany the winner.

The initiative is principally – though not exclusively – aimed at junior ratings and junior NCOs who stand out as role models to their peers and subordinates.

RM musician Cpl Bug Chris 'Bomber' Harris, who serves with the band at Raleigh, produced a video for the encore at the Mountbatten Festival of Music – sailors and marines fooling along to Pharrell Williams' worldwide hit *Happy* – which was seen not just by the audience at the Royal Albert Hall, but thousands of internet users courtesy of social media (you can watch it at www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0l4hlGpkj8).

Chris also stepped in when the Band Service urgently needed to edit some footage to accompany one of the festival's key pieces accompanying Gallipoli centenary commemorations. And just for good measure he performed on stage alongside his fellow musicians.

"It was a complete surprise to receive the award. I was just doing my job, but it's nice to be recognised," says Chris, 30, from Ipswich, who was handed his voucher for the nearby Fleet Club by WO1 Cass (pictured, above right by Dave Sherfield).

"Videos are now an expected part of any massed bands performance along with the other production such as lighting and sound but I've had no formal training and it started as a bit of a hobby. I'm quite creative and people seem to like what I do. I'm currently working on a video to go with the finale at next year's festival which will mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Jutland."

Aboard the Iron Duck, PO(CIS) Andrew Luker



proved to be "a true stalwart", helping to guide the Portsmouth-based frigate out of upkeep, through sea trials, Operational Sea Trials and finally a South Atlantic deployment.

And when the tour of duty was over... he volunteered to help out with any IT issues on board over the Christmas period and to stay on an extra three weeks to cover for a shipmate who was landed.

All of which the senior rating did "at significant inconvenience to himself and his family" yet was carried out with a "friendly demeanour and never-faltering 'can do' attitude."

And finally... L/Cpl Jack Taylor of 29 Commando Regiment RA faced "a hectic workload from the moment his feet touched the ground" as a gun fitter in the snow of Norway, in Scotland and back at base in the Citadel in Plymouth.

He found himself changing the barrel of one of the regiment's 105mm guns in the Arctic as well as being called upon to repair, maintain and certify weapons ranging from pistols to .50 calibre heavy machine-guns, "cutting no corners and putting countless hours in."

Quite simply, say his commanders, without his efforts in 2015, "the regiment would have struggled to gain as much training on the light guns as it has."

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION



Contact NFF

■ 023 9265 4374/admin@nff.org.uk/Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

Or visit www.nff.org.uk for news, our free, quarterly Homeport magazine and monthly e-update.



THE NFF represents the views of Royal Naval and Royal Marines families to the chain of command, government and service providers.

Tell us where *you* think the system is working – and where improvement is required. We also assist with individual enquiries. If you are struggling to navigate through Service policies and the support system, we may be able to help. Here are some examples of recent questions we have answered:

I need to let my husband know that a member of our family is unwell and has been hospitalised. Whilst they are now back home, I would like my husband to know the situation. I have e-mailed him on the ship but not had a response.

Unfortunately e-mails are not always downloaded straight away when a ship is deployed and they can take up to 24 hours to get through. The Royal Navy & Royal Marines Welfare team – 023 9272 8777 – can get messages through to the ship in circumstances such as this.

I am due to move into Service Family Accommodation for the first time. I understand that instead of paying council tax, there is a CILOCT (Contributions in Lieu of Council Tax) charge. Does this charge include my wife or does she have to pay council tax separately?

The CILOCT charge is per property; the amount depends on the type of property and not individuals, therefore there is only one charge to pay.

Can you confirm when LSA (Longer Separation Allowance) is payable?

LSA is payable from the first day of qualifying separation, but only for periods whilst the Service person is:

a) at sea;

b) alongside in port outside UK waters;

c) at anchor or a buoy in UK waters;

d) alongside in UK ports other than a ship's base port for periods not exceeding 14 days;

e) a member of a submarine nuclear propulsion watch when nuclear safety regulations require the maintenance of sea watches alongside, including in base port.

In all of these circumstances entitlement to LSA will cease during periods that a Service person returns to the family home or permanent residence. Where ships' visits, programmed to complete within 14 days, are extended, entitlement to LSA will cease immediately. LSA will not be paid when alongside in base port.

My husband is paying Child Maintenance for his children from a previous marriage. The calculations are taking his allowances as well as pay into account. Is this right?

Any form of taxable pay can be included in Child Maintenance calculations, including allowances. Service personnel should inform the Child Support Agency or Child Maintenance Service of any change in their circumstances that

may affect their payments. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/child-maintenance.

I am in the process of trying to re-mortgage my property and during the application process with lenders I have been asked my job and retirement age. Some lenders are recognising that I am in the Armed Forces and won't consider my earnings past my Forces' retirement age and hence won't lend me a mortgage. Surely this is a disadvantage?

Some companies use this policy for professions that have a set retirement age, however the Armed Forces Covenant recognises that Service personnel and families should not be disadvantaged due to the nature of Service life. The Defence Relationship Team is a MOD department dealing specifically with the Corporate Covenant to inform companies about the disadvantages of military life. See pages 14-21 of the summer 2015 edition of Homeport (available via www.nff.org.uk) for more on the Armed Forces Covenant and page 45 on mortgages for Armed Forces families.

I live in Service Family Accommodation and my carpets have seen better days and the walls could do with decorating. What are the rules regarding decorating and getting carpets replaced?

JSP (Joint Service Publication) 464 is the definitive policy for the provision of Service Family Accommodation, Single Living Accommodation, and the substitute equivalents. Chapter 07.14 explains the process for carpet cleaning and replacement, and Chapter 07.16 explains the process for decorating. Occupants can contact CarillionAmey on 0800 707 6000 to arrange an appointment for a Local Housing Officer to survey the property.



WELFARE

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● Les Dennis with a photo of lookalike sailor LStd John Henderson

Meet Les Miserables

DO WE have any pictures of comedian, quiz show host and *Coronation Street* actor Les Dennis looking forlorn, holding a picture of a sailor who's a look-alike?

Yes we do. And do we have any pictures of Les Dennis look-alike LStd John 'Dickie' Henderson looking forlorn, holding a picture of his famous doppelgänger?

Yes, we have that as well. TV star Les Dennis played along with the crew of HMS Scott who think their shipmate is his spitting image.

Dickie's shipmates on the survey ship, which is undergoing tests and training following an overhaul in Plymouth, had been ribbing him that he bore a striking resemblance to the actor.

To prove it LMA Jennifer Murch took a photo of Dickie alongside a picture of Les on his smartphone and tweeted it to the comedian.

Which prompted Les to respond with a picture of his own. Looking glum. Holding up a picture of his look-alike – along with the message "Back at you."

Jen added: "He also sent a private message asking for the ship's address so he can send the junior rates' mess a signed photo. It'll take pride and place in our mess for deployment."

For younger readers, Les was a mainstay of Saturday night telly in the 80s before hosting quiz show *Family Fortunes*. More recently he's carved a fresh career – and earned a new generation of fans – as an actor in various soap operas, becoming a regular in *Corrie* last summer.



● LStd John Henderson with a photo of Les Dennis

Arctic Star for family

THE great-grandson of a WW2 senior rate collected the Arctic Star which his ancestor never knew he was eligible for.

CPO William Wallace passed away in 1955 at the age of 48.

His grandson Midshipman Rob 'Reggie' Perren of RNR unit HMS President researched his grandfather's service record.

He discovered he served in the heavy cruiser HMS Sussex and, after tracking down the ship's log, he was able to prove CPO Wallace was eligible for the medal.

Rear Admiral Clive Johnstone presented the Arctic Star to nine-year-old Joel Perren, 74 years after the action for which it was awarded.

The ceremony took place during HMS President's Divisions at the Tower of London.



Paying tribute for dad

RATING Matt 'Spender' Penny pays tribute to sailors who lost their lives in HMS Glamorgan during the Falklands conflict in 1982.

LLogs(SC) Spender visited during his sixth tour of the Falklands, this time in HMS Lancaster.

His father Dave, who was deployed to the South Atlantic in 1982, served in HMS Glamorgan as a stores accountant

and was on board the day she was hit by an Exocet missile.

Matt said he felt proud and emotional to represent his father at a memorial service for those lost in HMS Glamorgan.

Dave Penny, who lives in Gosport, was last in the Falkland Islands in 1985 onboard HMS Birmingham and is hoping to return in the near future.



● POA Geraint 'Taff' Morris

Taff marks his ton

ACHIEVING 1,000 hours airborne for any cadre of aircrew is a significant milestone which can take many years once flying training is complete.

PO Aircrewman Geraint 'Taff' Morris recently achieved the accolade whilst serving onboard HMS Portland with 829 NAS 02 Flight.

HMS Portland and 02 Flight were involved in two anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercises, Dynamic Mongoose 15 and Sharkhunt 15, where Taff Morris played a vital role onboard the Mk 2 Merlin.

"I am very proud to have achieved 1,000 hours as an ASW Aircrewman, but to have achieved it whilst assigned to HMS Portland is a great honour," said Taff.

Award for engineer

FLEET Commander Vice Admiral Sir Philip Jones has presented his commendations to Royal Navy, RFA and civilian staff for their outstanding efforts over the past year.

WO1 ET Nicholas Ullett from Plymouth was awarded a commendation in recognition of his outstanding efforts supporting the Weapons Engineering Department in HMS Tireless.

WO1 Ullett said: "It's a great honour to receive this award, recognising the effort of, not only myself, but everyone who worked so hard on Tireless to complete her demanding work packages, and on operations.

"It was a very enjoyable, yet challenging, deployment."

Nicholas, who grew up in Southampton but who has called Plymouth home for years, joined the Royal Navy in 1991.

The 43-year-old has two children and is set to marry his partner, Janice, this summer.

He added: "My last deployment with Tireless – the one that I received this commendation for – was by far my favourite deployment in the Royal Navy.

"It was a truly multi-faceted deployment from supporting ongoing operations as well as helping in the search for the missing Malaysian airliner."

1710's class act for young boffins

SCHOOLCHILDREN paid a visit to 1710 NAS in Portsmouth Naval Base to see just how exciting a job in science and engineering can be.

The squadron is a centre of excellence providing specialist engineering, repair, upgrade and scientific support to Royal Navy air squadrons and military front line units on land and sea operations across the world. It is proud of its achievements and is working with schools to promote science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects.

A group of 12 children from Meon Junior School in Portsmouth got the rare opportunity to see inside the squadron and try out some of the training facilities that air engineering technicians use.

Their task was to reduce vibrations on the aircraft, drawing on their engineering knowledge to correct faults that in a real-life situation could destroy the helicopter or injure the people inside.

They also spent time in the hangar learning about the Royal Navy Sea King helicopter that is currently at the squadron's base to receive modifications.

Finlay Haynes, 11, said: "It has been a really fun day because we got to learn how to do real things in the lab. The best thing was getting to control the helicopter and make it work."

Classmate Jacob Mahmud, 11, said: "It



● Beau Kelly watches as Harley Suffield plays with a model helicopter with CPO Gus Cowley

was great because we got to see how the experts do it and learn a bit more than most people would."

So keen are 1710 to put their knowledge and enthusiasm to good use that 24 of the squadron's 170 personnel have recently trained as STEM ambassadors and will work with schools in the community to spread the word about the opportunities which come from pursuing STEM subjects and careers.

Air Engineering Officer Lt Andy Vance, who is one of the STEM ambassadors, said: "It's great to be able to show these children what we do and how we use science,



● CPO Cowley helps Jake Brown and Finlay Haynes check out the rotor section of a Chinook Pictures: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum

technology, engineering and maths every day providing the service we do supporting the front line. They have been very keen but have probably grown up with the idea that scientists and engineers are mad, funny guys with a white coat and crazy hair mixing potions all day but now they've come here and seen first hand what we provide and they love it."

The majority of 1710 NAS personnel are either Royal Navy engineers or civil servants but Army Engineers from the REME and RAF are also assigned to the squadron. The civilians are generally scientists with a broad range of skills.



● Rob Perren and son Joel with Rear Admiral Clive Johnstone

Widow hands over stalwart's sword

THE sword of a long-serving Royal Marine has been presented to the corps to be worn by Regimental Sergeant Major Phil Gilby.

Rosemary Donald, widow of Major Alastair Donald, attended the presentation at the National Museum of the Royal Navy's Royal Marines Museum, Eastney.

Maj Donald served as Aide de Camp to the late Lord Mountbatten and was a founding member of the Royal Marines Historical Society.

Mrs Donald said: "This is a unique occasion for me and my family to present the sword to the Corps RSM.

"Alastair would have been so proud of this. For a former Royal Marine to be honored in this way is important, not just for us but for the wider Corps family.

"We are delighted that his personal sword should go to the Royal Marines and be used in perpetuity."

In 1964, Maj Donald co-founded the Royal Marines Historical Society and served the council in many capacities.

He was chairman from 2000 until 2002, when he was elected vice president.

He was recognised as the guardian of Royal Marines' ceremonial traditions until his death in March 2014.



● Rosemary Donald presents the sword to RSM Phil Gilby Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum

Dragon bids farewell to CO

SAILORS on Britain's premier air defence warship treated their commanding officer to a send-off in style – rowing Capt Rex Cox across Portsmouth Harbour in a dragon boat.

After two years at the helm of destroyer HMS Dragon, Capt Cox found his men and women taking charge as he stepped off the 8,500-tonne ship.

They powered past the 500ft warship – recently returned from patrolling the North and South Atlantic and the Pacific – with some of the 200 ship's company lining the flight deck for a farewell salute.

All of which was a bit of a surprise for Capt Cox, who has previously commanded HMS Severn, Manchester and York, and envisaged a low-key departure with an informal chat with his sailors over coffee before being piped off Dragon.

They did that. But they also parked an HMS Dragon bus at the foot of the gangway – it's one of 26 run by First Bus which carry the names of

Portsmouth-based warships around south-east Hampshire.

It carried the captain a short distance to a jetty where some of the ship's company were waiting in the dragon boat.

"I couldn't have asked for a better send-off," said Capt Cox, who now heads to a senior staff appointment at the MOD HQ in Whitehall.

"It's the people in Dragon that make her what she is and we couldn't do what we do without the support of our friends and families."

Command of the destroyer – which stands out from the rest of the Type 45 flotilla courtesy of her huge red dragon motif on her bow – is in the hands of her Executive Officer Lt Cdr Joe Allfree as she begins an extensive period of maintenance.

"We look to find a unique way to send our captains off in style and we thought the dragon boat, with our name Dragon, was a unique way to do it," he said.

Picture: LA(Phot) Stephen Johncock

Capturing memories of life at Dartmouth

THE memories of cadets trained at Britannia Royal Navy College during the 20th century are to be recorded thanks to a £45,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The Britannia Museum Trust Oral History Project will gather first-hand accounts of life as a Naval Officer Cadet between 1930 and 1980.

The Britannia Association, the College Alumni organisation, has also contributed a substantial sum to the project.

This will be the first oral history recordings at the college and will involve the gathering of former cadets' memories of what they did; what they wanted to do; what they believed they were doing at the time and how that influenced their future career and decisions.

The aim of the project is to prepare audio and video archives, DVDs, a website and accompanying literature from the Officer Cadets' testimony, who after training at BRNC, went on to command Naval battles from WW2 through to the Gulf wars.

Cdr Rob Dunn, the Commander of BRNC and Chairman of the Britannia Museum Trust, said: "Oral history is an established and legitimate area of historical study. Subjectivity is as much the business of history as the more visible 'facts'.

"We are grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the funding which will help bring this exciting project to fruition.



● Mealtime at BRNC and receiving pocket money on the quarterdeck, both in the 1950s

Pictures: Britannia Museum Trust

"We will involve volunteers from the community, students from local schools and from the Universities of Plymouth and Exeter to help with the project."

The interviewers, all local volunteers, will be trained by a British Library expert.

The oral histories alongside photos, letters and records, will give context to the items already in the Britannia Museum, located at BRNC, speaking to today's audience through the themes of courage, discipline, relationships and war.

The records obtained from the former cadets, some now in their

80s and 90s, will contribute to the BRNC and national archives and relate to the current Royal Navy Officer training.

Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: "The Britannia Royal Naval College has been at the forefront of Naval officer training for over a century and countless cadets have begun their careers there.

"Now, thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, their memories can be captured for the first time giving new audiences the chance to hear the true personal stories of the lives, hopes and futures of the young



MOD PC calls time on career

A MINISTRY of Defence Police officer has retired after 32 years of service.

PC Alison Munsie served as an air mechanic in the Wrens before joining the police.

She was originally stationed at HMS Daedalus and HMS Heron before transferring to the PTI branch in July 1979.

She served in HMS Collingwood and Dryad until April 1982 when she opted for a change of career.

Chief Inspector Fiona Kerr said: "Alison has been based at HMNB Portsmouth for her entire career and has embraced the opportunities that come with working at a busy, proactive station."

PC Munsie was the first officer at the base to complete the Tutor Constables course and was fundamental in setting up and running the Station/Divisional Criminal Justice Unit and the Witness Care Unit.

In 1986 Alison was seconded to the Police Training School where she resumed her old Navy role as a Physical Training Instructor, (remembered fondly by PS Martin Terry who was Class Leader of Initial Recruits Course 2/86!).

Alison was one of the first female Traffic Officers within the Force and carried out this role for five years, returning to station



● Alison Munsie with one of her retirement gifts

duties in 2009, carrying out the AFO/ASV role.

Chief Insp Kerr added: "Alison is known for being firm, fair and consistent – you know where you stood with her and she worked hard throughout her career."

"Working for the last few months within the Marine Unit and frustrated with the bureaucracy of MOD procurement, Alison achieved a great number of targets within a few months to the eternal gratitude of PS Frank Conlon and his team.

"Congratulations on a wonderful career. It has been our pleasure to know you and work with you. There is life after MDP and I'm sure you will be out there living it."

Crew awarded their Wings

COMMANDO Helicopter Force aircrew were awarded their Wings and graduation certificates in the third and final ceremony to be held at RAF Benson, prior to the Operational Conversion Force moving back to RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset.

The ceremony was the culmination of eight months of

intense flying training on the Merlin Mk3 for No.23 course.

Aircrewmen Wings were awarded to Cpl Simon Wynne, LH Richard Stock, Lt Peter Crease, Lt Thomas Richards, WOA Richard Byrne, CPOA Michael Rendall, POA Ross Scullion, Cpl Jamie Whitehouse and LH Simon Evans.



● RNA National Chairman S/M Chris Dovey, who stood in for National President Rear Admiral John McAnally at the drumhead service close to the harbour in Folkestone on Sunday morning

Voting value added for loyal Associates

DELEGATES approved a proposal to extend full voting rights to Associate members who have proved their commitment to the Association.

A National Council motion sought to extend these rights to Associate members who have been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation, and would put them in the same position as Associate members who have been elected to branch committees.

S/M Hunter, proposing the motion for the National Council, said: "Last year the RNA recognised the contribution Associate members give by extending voting rights to those who were elected to branch committees.

"Just now we shortened the period of time they have to wait to get onto a committee.

"These changes, while welcome, have created an anomaly where an associate member of one year's standing could be elected to a committee and have a vote, yet an associate member of long standing who has been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation and is not on the committee cannot vote on important issues at a branch meeting.

"This proposal is asking you

to add value to the Certificate of Appreciation by extending voting rights to the members whose commitment to the RNA has been recognised in this way."

The motion, seconded by Bloxwich branch, was not

debated – instead Conference went straight to a vote, and was carried with no opposition.

Two other National Council motions mainly tidying up, correcting or clarifying RNA rules, were also approved with

no discussion by the 96 delegates present in the hall at the Grand Burstin Hotel.

Motions 1 (with six separate elements) and 2 (with ten elements) were both supported unopposed.

● The parade forms up in front of the Grand Burstin Hotel



Counting on S/M Ray

TRADITION dictates that two guests of honour open proceedings at the business end of the National Conference – a senior Naval officer and a dignitary from the local authority at the venue.

If the latter has a Naval connection, so much the better – and that was certainly the case in Kent.

The Mayor of Folkestone, Cllr Emily Arnold – the daughter of a Wren and a Royal Marine ("so the speech will be short," she said) – officially opened the Conference, and Vice Admiral Peter Hudson, Commander Maritime Command at NATO HQ, then briefed shipmates on recent Royal Navy operations

and future equipment.

The master of ceremonies for 2015 was Deputy National President S/M Mark Slawson, who stepped in at very short notice when National President Vice Admiral John McAnally had to travel to London early on Saturday to be with a relative in hospital.

S/M Slawson thanked organisers of the Conference, including S/M Stephen Shaw of Folkestone branch who stepped in when original organiser S/M Fred Westwood had to step down, and also S/Ms Tugg Wilson, Roger Ide and Tony Sattin of Area 2 for hosting the event.

Cdre Slawson also noted

that while Folkestone was the birthplace of Samuel Plimsoll, of ship safety fame, it was perhaps of more significance to delegates that the town is also the HQ for over-50s services firm Saga...

Aficanados sat back and enjoyed the measured delivery of treasurer S/M Ray Barraclough – measured at 16 minutes 2 seconds, according to S/M Slawson.

The key points from the accounts, once again prepared with much help from Brooms Professional Services Ltd, were a deficit of almost £123,000 for the year, which effectively decreased the Associations reserves by seven per cent – although the deficit was less than expected.

The treasurer reminded shipmates that the RNA's main source of income remains subscriptions, which fell from £150,000 in 2013 to £142,100 the following year, reflecting the increasing age profile of members and the demise of 14 branches, resulting in a 5.3 per cent decline in membership.

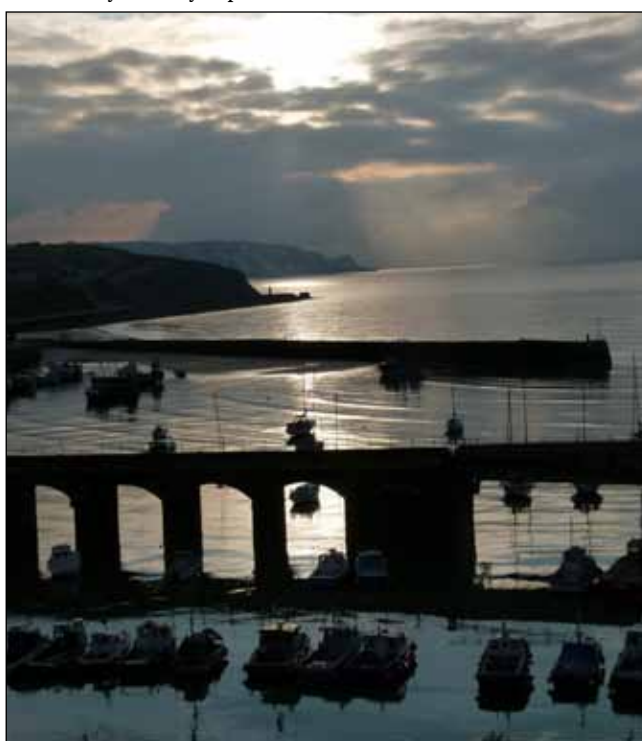
Income tax reclaimed on Gift Aid also fell, by 4.7 per cent.

On the plus side, the Shipmates campaign received a grant of £15,000 which covered virtually all expenditure for the year, and funding has been secured for a further five years.

"I hope you will agree that the Association has managed its affairs to good effect over the year," said S/M Barraclough.

"It is not without effort, of course, and I should like to commend to you the magnificent way in which the general secretary and the headquarters staff have responded to the extra challenges over the past year."

● Early morning sunlight over Folkestone Harbour – all images on these pages were captured by Association lensman S/M Nigel Huxtable



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Awards heading south

THE South of England and the south of Spain featured prominently in this year's recruitment awards, the winners of which are traditionally revealed at the National Conference.

The Sword of Honour for the area with the greatest increase in membership in 2014 went to **Area 3**, which covers central Southern England, while the Brigg's Rose Bowl, for the small branch (fewer than 30 full members) which was most successful at recruiting new faces was **Lee-on-the-Solent and Stubbington**, in Hampshire.

The Brigg's Dirk, for the most successful large branch of more than 30 full members, was won by **Warwick**.

In the overseas categories, the certificate for the most successful large branch in terms of recruitment was **Torre Vieja**, 30 miles south of Alicante on the Costa Blanca in Spain.

And it was **Costa Blanca North** branch that took the honours for the overseas small branch category.

The Tasker Bowl, for the area with the most Gift Aid returns, went to **No 8 Area**, which covers the Midlands.

Perth in 2017

BRANCH motion 2 saw S/M Michael Hesketh (**Forth Valley**) proposed that Scottish Area should hold the 2017 National Conference in Perth.

Seconded by the **City of Inverness**, the motion sparked one objection – S/M Tug Wilson (**Frome**) pointed out that it fell outside recent initiative that put the conference and accommodation under one roof.

But the motion was carried by a large majority.

Cadet support

THE strong bond between the RNA and the Sea Cadet Corps was further strengthened at Folkestone when cadets played their part in various ceremonies over the weekend.

Members of **Folkestone and Hythe** unit, including AC Tristan Glendenning, OC Louis McMullan, and MC1s George Pettifol and Ross Budden, lent a hand on conference Saturday.

And on Sunday a combined cadet band – Folkestone and Hythe, and **New Romney** – provided music for the parade and drumhead service, while another seven cadets from the local unit – including the Mayor's daughter Alia – were on ceremonial duties.



● **National standard bearer S/M Bob Coburn on duty at the Sunday morning drumhead service at Folkestone Harbour**

Subscriptions: 'There will be consequences...'

SHIPMATES were given a stark warning by the Deputy National President after a proposal to increase subscriptions was defeated.

Delegates voted down the National Council motion to increase subs by 50 per cent to £15 – which would have been the

first increase in ten years.

Before the motion was proposed, S/M Slawson asked delegates to bear in mind that they were not "just postmen" – they should not just vote as their branch decided, but listen to the debate with open minds and take into consideration fresh arguments or information that

could have swayed the branch's decision had it been available.

National chairman S/M Chris Dovey acknowledged that a motion to increase subscriptions was never welcomed, but it was now time to consider it.

The fact that the economy has now picked up, and that pensions have generally increased, means

pressure to keep subscriptions stable has now reduced.

With lower legacy income, S/M Dovey added that the value of the £10 subscription introduced ten years ago was now worth less than £7, and an increase of £5 was the equivalent of less than two pints of beer a year – or five teaspoonfuls of beer a week.

"Is that such a hardship to bear to keep our RNA as the premier ex-Naval association that it is?" he said.

"We have the lowest subs of any major ex-Services association, and will remain lower than most, even with a £5 increase."

He added that a staged increase in two or three steps would be costly in terms of reprinted stationery and reprogramming online payment systems.

"This motion merely seeks to restore to the Association in 2016 the same value of our subscription that it was worth in 2005, plus one pound."

Tenbury Wells seconded the motion.

S/M Brian Angelos (**Corby**) said that the rise 50 per cent rise was hard to understand when inflation had risen 17 per cent, and that with many pensioners in the branch every penny counted.

S/Ms **Pete Renwick (Hartlepool)** and **Glyn Johns (Mansfield)** said their branches feared a rise would hit Association membership hard.

South Bristol branch member S/M Norman Low supported the increase, saying

the increase was a "ridiculous amount of money" and he could not believe that members are in such dire straits that they could not afford it.

"If we believe in what we are doing, being an organisation that is caring for others, we will continue to pay increases in the future, but more particularly this £5 at this time," he declared.

An amendment to stage the increase over four years fell when it attracted the support of less than a third of delegates.

S/M **Jim Butterson (Portland)** also backed the motion, so long as it went up in one go, and not in stages.

An amendment, proposed by S/M **Ron Burdekin (Falmouth)** and backed by **Spennymoor** branch, to raise subscriptions to £15 over four years was defeated, attracting the support of less than a third of delegates.

The original proposal – for a £5 rise – gained the support of less than half of delegates, so was also defeated.

When the result was announced, S/M Slawson said: "Interesting. That now becomes a really serious issue for the finances of the RNA going forward."

"But that is the decision of Conference, so I am afraid we are going to have to live with that decision until we come to address it again."

He concluded: "There are sure to be consequences of some sort – we just don't know what they are at the moment..."



● **Parade marshal S/M Mick Kieran at the drumhead service on Sunday morning**

Back to the seaside

AFTER the 2014 Conference in land-locked Coventry, shipmates knew they were back by the sea in Kent.

The chosen hotel, **Britannia's Grand Burstin**, resembles a gigantic ship and sits adjacent to Folkestone's beach as well as the harbour.

The offer of a short (free) sea trip to France saw six coaches leave the hotel at 7am on Saturday for a day in Boulogne, while the main business of the weekend was attended to.

Staff at the **Grand Burstin** were praised for their efforts on Saturday night as almost 500 members and guests sat down in the **Harbour Restaurant** for an efficiently-delivered

four-course meal, followed by entertainment.

And the Sunday morning drumhead service was staged in a corner of the car park at the mouth of the harbour, with the waves lapping the sea wall.

The venue was chosen as a march up the hill to the nearest church was deemed too challenging for some shipmates.

The Sea Cadets' combined band led a parade of 37 standards, including the National Standard, once again carried by S/M **Bob Coburn**, of **City of Inverness**, in his role as National Standard Bearer.

Behind them marched almost 250 shipmates, including a considerable presence from the Irish Naval Association.

The salute was taken by the Mayor of Folkestone, Cllr Emily Arnold, and the Vice Chairman of Shepway District Council, Cllr David Owen.

To the strains of *Sailing*, and with gulls wheeling overhead, cadets then formed a drumhead altar for a service led by the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Ven Ian Wheatley, which featured a carefree and impromptu display of dancing by the mayor's young daughter Scarlett (for which she was later thanked by S/M Chris Dovey.)

With National President Rear Admiral John McAnally still unable to attend, National Chairman S/M Chris Dovey delivered the traditional final 'harangue' to the gathered members.

His address also contained plenty of praise – for the presence of the Irish contingent, and for the efforts of the cadet band (which

featured a former member who had returned to help out – he is now serving in Type 45 destroyer HMS Dragon).

The band then marched off to a round of applause from shipmates, and Conference was over.

An initial wash-up by HQ staff indicated that the event – and the choice of venue, both town and hotel – had been well-received by delegates and shipmates in general.

And their enhanced first aid skills – they underwent training with the Red Cross to ensure they were up-to-date – were not required at all.

So the merchandise was boxed up, the vans were packed, and thoughts turned to National Conference 2016, which will be held at Wokefield Park near Reading.



● **Not sure exactly what his job description is, but RNA sound and lighting expert Lyndon Ford has his finger in many pies at the National Conference. Responsible for all the microphones, speakers and (more recently) the big screens at the Conference, church parade and evening functions, Lyndon – a trained organist – also bangs out hymns to order, whether at grand churches or, in this case, beside a van on the car park at Folkestone Harbour that served the Association as a parade ground**

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Salute to Armed Forces

Birmingham reunion – in Bolton

VJ Day plans unveiled

MARKET Harborough branch took part in Armed Forces Day celebrations in the town's Welland Park.

The day opened with a flag-raising ceremony and a muster of veterans, cadets and soldiers from the Defence Animal Centre.

The parade was marshalled by Lt Adam Slonecki RN.

Sea Cadets gave displays in the arena, entertainers were on hand throughout the day and visitors also had stalls, food and a bouncy castle to enjoy.

The Royal British Legion Riders branch rode through the town before arriving at the park for the public to admire their cherished motorbikes.

Emergency services displayed some of their vehicles, while World War 1 re-enactors pitched their tents and gave drill lessons to volunteer youngsters.

RNA shipmates had a caravan and awning where they dispensed coffee and tots and encouraged as much recruiting as possible.

The day ended with a Sunset ceremony, featuring the Sea Cadets.

Birthday bash

FORMER Navy Secretary and wartime Fleet Air Arm pilot Sir Patrick Duffy has marked his 95th birthday at a gathering in the Naval Club, London.

Sir Patrick was Navy Minister in Jim Callaghan's Labour government.

Amongst the guests was Rear Admiral Mark Mellett of the Irish Navy – they met at BRNC Dartmouth in the 1970s when the Admiral was a cadet there.

Sir Patrick flew Swordfish of 811 NAS from HMS Biter; he went on to fly Albacores, Barracudas and Fireflies.

Complex visit

CITY of Glasgow branch received an invitation for four members to visit the Scottish Veterans' Residences' new complex in Cranhill, Glasgow.

S/Ms Kenn McKinnon, Brian Mackenzie, David Carlin and Anne McKinnon were met by manager Edward Gorman and introduced to staff and veterans.

They were given a tour of the complex, which has 30 individual flats, a library, games room, IT room, conference rooms, meeting rooms and a cafe – all designed to help ex-Servicemen and women and their families integrate back into civilian life by assisting them to obtain housing and jobs.

↓ RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com
↓ 023 9272 3747
↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

SHIPMATES from Type 42 destroyer HMS Birmingham gathered for a reunion in Bolton. Former Royal Navy chef Kevin Ridsdill was the man behind the reunion, for those who served in Operation Corporate, the campaign to regain the Falklands in 1982.

The reunion was held at the Britannia Hotel over two days, with a gala dinner as one of the highlights.

Guests of honour were Ian McVitie and Nigel Morris, two of the men behind the successful campaign to extend eligibility for the

South Atlantic Medal without rosette to those who sailed into a still-dangerous situation after the fighting had formally ceased – as was the case with the men of HMS Birmingham.

A raffle and auction was held on the gala evening which raised £500 for SAMA.

Cambrians gather

MEMBERS of the HMS Cambrian Association, whose number include veterans of the World War 2 Arctic convoys, enjoyed an evening with newly-appointed Armed Forces Minister Penny

Mordaunt, the Conservative MP for Portsmouth North, when they gathered for a memorable reunion dinner onboard HMS Warrior 1860 in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Association President and former RN Captain S/M Ken Tullett – a one-time Midshipman in HMS Cambrian – welcomed and congratulated Ms Mordaunt with her companion, Ian Lyon, just five days after she had been promoted to the post of Minister,

and she replied with a speech which confirmed that she was well aware of the need to retain the confidence and capability of the Armed Forces.

She stressed the importance of reconnecting the public with our Armed Forces.

Ms Mordaunt said that she had enjoyed the evening ("I've had a real blast tonight") and later went on Twitter to say: 'Big thank you to HMS Cambrian Association for hosting me on Warrior tonight. Great to hear your stories of service and friendship.'

HMS Cambrian was a wartime-built destroyer of the Ca-class which saw service in the Arctic, the Western Approaches and the Far East, and was modernised in the late 1950s, subsequently serving East of Suez for three more commissions and being involved in the 1960s Indonesian Confrontation.

She fired her guns in anger for the first time in nearly 20 years when she operated in support of 45 Cdo Royal Marines to put down a mutiny of local troops at Dar-es-Salaam in 1964.

Her sister ship, HMS Cavalier, is preserved at Chatham. Historic Dockyard.



● S/M Roger Harris, secretary of Cardiff branch, pictured with Armed Forces Minister, Maritime Reservist (and apparently a supporter of the RNA) Penny Mordaunt on Armed Forces Day in the Welsh capital

Trawler squadron meets up

MEMBERS of the 11th Mine Countermeasures Squadron were reunited in Hull for the first time in 33 years.

The squadron were made up of five Hull trawlers, Northella, Junella, Farnella, Cordella and Pict, that were requisitioned for the Falklands Conflict in 1982 and were commissioned into the Royal Navy to become minesweepers.

Among those who gathered at the East Coast port were three of the commanding officers – Martyn Holloway (senior Naval officer 11MCM and CO of Cordella), Rob Bishop (Farnella) and Jeremy Greenop (Northella).

One of the other two COs now lives in Australia and was unable to attend and the other died some years ago.

The evening started with a private meal at the Kingston Theatre Hotel with guest Cdr Richard Goldstone, Commander MCM2.

This was followed by 'up spirits' in the New Clarence pub, where the crews were met by veterans from Hull.

Fullers brewery kindly loaned the ship's bell from Northella, which is now behind the bar at the Admiralty Tavern in Trafalgar Square in London, – and they also donated a few cases of beer.

Sunday saw a commemorative service at Holy Trinity Church, attended by various Service and local dignitaries, and Andrew Marr of Marr International, original owners of the trawlers.

Also attending were ex-trawlermen and local people, while the Hull sea cadet unit TS Iron Duke provided the guard of honour.



● Trawlers of the 11th Mine Countermeasures Squadron are commissioned at Rosyth in 1982

Donation decision

MEMBERS of Stockbridge and Deepcar branch have decided to donate to RNBT, Seafarers UK, Sheffield Sea Cadets, Weston Park Hospice and a dementia charity.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery tanker in our June edition (right) was RFA Blue Rover, which later became the Portuguese ship NRP Bérrio.

Our £50 prize for the correct answers goes to Mr D Phillips, of Ammanford in Wales.

This month's ship (above), was launched by Doig's at Grimsby in October 1955.

She proved effective on Fishery Protection Squadron duties, but then ran aground in October 1971.

Although refloated and taken to Greenock, she was deemed beyond economical repair, and was eventually sold for scrapping in late 1974.

1) What was her name, and 2) on what group of islands did she run aground?

We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News,



Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY. Coupons giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

The closing date for entries is September 14.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our October edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 246

Name

Address

My answers: (1).....

(2).....



Ask Jack

HMS Irwell: John Mason is chairman of Wallasey Sea Cadet unit, TS Astute, and is trying to obtain a photograph of the former RN ship HMS Irwell for their records. For a short while after WW2, the unit was based aboard HMS Irwell in Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead. Irwell was laid down as HMS Goole in 1918; in 1926 she was renamed HMS Irwell and towed to Manchester Division of RNVR, where she replaced an earlier HMS Irwell (which was renamed HMS Eaglet). 1931 towed to Birkenhead and became RNVR drillship. 1939 temporarily renamed HMS Eaglet II. 1942 the name Irwell was restored. 1945 closed down. 1948 became an outlying unit of the Mersey Division RNVR based at Morpeth Dock. 1962 towed to Lacmotts Ltd, Liverpool, for breaking up. If you can help contact John at jmasonjohn@outlook.com or tel 0151 638 4314.

HMS Manxman: Does any reader have any photographs of the Independence Ceremony for Sabah, Indonesia in late 1963, especially the Honour Guard, presented by HMS Manxman, of which D Baker was part? Contact Mr Baker, 9 Ridge Crescent, West Harptree, Bristol BS40 6EE or tel 01761 221285.

Lt Bryan Evans RN (Deceased) – 819 NAS, HMS Gannet. Recently prior to a school reunion, a photograph of Stephen Perry and a mate from school appeared in the school nostalgia section of a local paper. Stephen was later shocked to discover that ‘Taffy’ Bryan Evans died as a result of a helicopter crash near Tayport on 21 June 1985 – he was the only fatality. Stephen lost touch with him in the late 70s and wonders if anyone remembers him and about his naval career, or has any photographs? Stephen has tried unsuccessfully to contact his family – he hailed from Bury in Lancashire. Stephen knows he was married to Liz and had no children. He has a Naval grave near Rosyth. He was a good mate and Stephen feels it would be great to fill in those missing years. Contact Stephen at stephen.perry@srft.nhs.uk, write to 9 Gordon Road, Eccles, Manchester M30 9QB or tel 07907 465624.

Royal Navy Display Team posters: Does anyone have, or does anyone know if any promotion posters of the 1984-85 Royal Navy Display Team are still kicking around? It may be they were of climbing the Mast at the Royal Albert Hall Remembrance Service as a promotion drive for volunteers. If you know of such posters, or any RNDT posters, then please get in touch with Ray Hamley at NAVYOPTRG-MWSWTGAWW3T45@mod.uk or rayhamley@me.com.

Commemorative Medallion: HMS Prince of Wales and Repulse were attacked and sunk by Japanese aircraft off Malaya on December 10 1941. Fifty years later a medallion was struck and a copy presented to each of the survivors who, after the sinking, spent the rest of the war as Japanese prisoners. It is not known whether it was at a POW camp or back in Cardiff after the war, that an ex-RAF airman, James F Chandler, met up with one of the survivors who had been presented with the medallion. The survivors’ name is at present unknown, but it appears they became friends, possibly through membership of the Java and Far East POW organisation. It is assumed that James Chandler acquired the medallion on the death of his friend.

Talking Navy News

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

James, who passed away in 2013, passed the medallion to his friend of eight years, Bob Monroe, with the instruction to place it in a ‘more suitable home’. A new home was found, and on June 27 2015, Armed Forces Day in Cardiff, Bob presented the medallion to the chairman of the Cardiff branch of the RNA. What I am trying to ascertain is the identity of the person presented with the medal, and why it was in the hands of James Chandler initially? If you have any information, contact Ransford T Rogers, PRO Cardiff RNA, at ransfordtrogers@gmail.com or tel 01443 223604.

Reunions

September 2015

HMS Plymouth: A memorial service at the Falkland Conflict memorial followed by a dedication service for an HMS Plymouth tree, plaque and bench will take place at the National Memorial Arboretum at 1200 on Saturday September 12. All ex-Plymouth crew are most welcome to attend – rig medals. Contact John Bradshaw at yeznbaby@yahoo.co.uk or tel 01592 872228.

Algerine Association Reunion: Annual Autumn Reunion will take place from September 14 to 21 at the Mill Rytte Holiday Village, Hayling Island. All branches of the Armed Forces - Military heroes, RNA Associations, Wrens Association, RNA Branches and all other Military Associations are welcome to join. Bring your family, friends and neighbours with you, all will be made welcome. For more details contact George Patience MBE on 01456 450659 or post to 97 Balmacaan Road, Drumnadrochit, Inverness IV63 6UY.

October 2015

HMS Mauritius (Shore Base): Eighth annual reunion will take place on Saturday October 3 at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. If you served on the island between 1962 and 1976, and would like to meet up with old friends and colleagues, more information is available from Tina Lowe (nee Hills) at tina.lowe3@ntlworld.com or tel 01329 843347.

Battleship HMS Vanguard: Reunion from October 9-12 at the New Continental Hotel, Plymouth, tel 01752 276797. The cost is £55 per person, per night, dinner, bed & breakfast; single rooms £80 per night. Full details can be obtained from the secretary, Mrs C Harris, on 01543 685099.

HMS Diamond Association: Reunion at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, from October 16-18. All welcome. For

Deaths

CAPT Tony Hutton. Entered Dartmouth 1945. His first ship was HMS Newfoundland, where he was president of the gunroom. 1956-62 served in minesweepers, also HMS Cossack and Wizard. 1960-62 aide-de-camp to the Governor of Queensland and as a Lt Cdr joined HMV Britannia; he left on promotion to command HMS Leopard. 1968-84 he alternated between staff appointments in London and Naples and sea jobs. As second-in-command of HMS Hermes 1974 it fell largely to him to organize the evacuation of British and Cypriot refugees when Turkey invaded

more information contact Ray Shipley at raymondshipley77@gmail.com or tel 01634 267084, or write giving all your details to 20, Winchester Way, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent ME8 8DD.

April 2016

Loch Class Frigates Association: Annual reunion takes place at the Duke of Cornwall Hotel, Millbay Road, Plymouth PL1 3LG, from April 22-25 2016. Reservations on 01752 275850, quote ‘Loch Class Frigates Reunion’, reservations@dukeofcornwall.co.uk or Sandra@thedukeofcornwall.co.uk by email. All members welcome. Membership is open to all who served on any of the Loch-class ships or their variants (Bay-class, Admirals Yachts, survey ships and repair ships). Some of these types of ships have their own associations but you can always join both. For details contact Andrew Nunn, Hon Sec LCFA at andrew.nunn@blueyonder.co.uk, tel 0117 950 5835 or see the website www.lochclassfrigates.com

Sports Lottery

JUNE 13: £5,000 – CPO N Lane; £1,800 – AB O Harrison; £800 – Lt Col J Stemp; £600 – AB T Hamlin; £500 – AB T Birch; £400 – LH A Buckley.
JUNE 20: £5,000 – Cdr C Gardner; £1,800 – AB A Beale; £800 – Lt A Johnston; £600 – Cdr D Swannick; £500 – AB R Threlkeld; £400 – Capt S Huntington.
JUNE 27: £5,000 – AB C Murray; £1,800 – Cdr N Bowen; £800 – Maj A Rutherford; £600 – Surg Lt Cdr (D) T Pepper; £500 – Mne D Hurley; £400 – Lt G McBeth.
JULY 4: £5,000 – AB D Vince; £1,800 – Col/Sgt J Weaver; £800 – Lt A Crawford; £600 – Lt R Gray; £500 – AB J Phillips; £400 – Mne J Knight.

Cyprus. With four other British ships 2,500 were rescued and he was appointed OBE for his role. Commanded HMS Norfolk (1978-80) and took command of Newcastle as the Falklands Conflict ended (1982-84). 1985-90 appeals director at the Royal Hospital for Neurodisability in Putney, raising £4m to fund construction of a brain injury unit. April 5. Aged 82.

Capt Michael A Johnson. HMS Excellent, Ulster, Dido, Exmouth, Birmingham, Cardiff, Penelope, FOF2 and FOF3 Staffs, CinC Fleet Staff, MOD DG Personal Services and Services Attaché Paris. June 6.

Surg Capt Anthony H Osborne FRCS. HMS Forth, President, Ark Royal, Illustrious, Centurion and RNH Haslar. July 1. Aged 75.

Cdr Charles B Armstrong. HMS Pembroke, Victory (Naval Base), Albion, Sydney, Gannet, Osprey, Loch Lomond, Helmsdale, Vulture, Seahawk, Curlew, NATO and Defence Attaché Copenhagen. June 10. Aged 92.

Cdr Ian P Hiley. HMS Dolphin, Neptune, Defiance, Maidstone, Mercury, Nelson, Terror, Taciturn, Narvik, Loch Veyatie, Asst Controller Polaris and Director Naval Foreign and Commonwealth Training. June 20. Aged 85.

Cdr David H Pepper. 800, 845, 767 NAS, HMS Eagle, Centaur, Peregrine, Fulmar, Daedalus, Bulwark, RNEC Manadan and MOD DGA(N). April.

Lt Col Ernest R Bridges. 42 and 45 Cdo, HMS Royal Prince, Indomitable, Implacable, Eagle, RN Plymouth, ITCRM, AWHQ and HQ RMFVR. June 18. Aged 96.

Lt Cdr Peter G de Souza. 736, 803 NAS. HMS Fulmar, Ark Royal, Heron, Falcon and Phoenicia. May 29. Aged 78.

Lt Cdr Michael W Walton. HMS Decoy, Glamorgan, Keppel, Antrim, RNEC Manadan, RNC Greenwich, MOD Procurement Executive and loan RNZN. May 30.

Lt Vernon H Seddon RNVR. 759 and 856 NAS. June 22.

Lt Robert J Shaw RNVR. 836, 825, 767, 769 and 785 NAS. April.

Sub Lt Geoffrey S Knowles RNVR. June 15. Aged 95.

Kenneth H Toop Seaman, Diver. Joined at 15, served 1938-53. First sea-going draft was as Boy 1st Class to HMS Royal Oak and was the youngest on board to survive the torpedo attack in Scapa Flow 1939. Served HMS Manchester and Ceylon. Driving force of the Royal Oak Association from the early 70s and secretary from the 90s until his death, driving annually by car from Hampshire to Orkney for the annual memorial service, and writing hundreds of letters every year to survivors and the

families of the bereaved. May 27. Aged 91.

John Gwilt CERA Fleet Boiler Maker. Served 1949-63, re-entered 1968-78. HMS Relentless, Centaur, Eagle and HMAS Sydney and Melbourne. Royal Naval Engineerroom Association. June 21. Aged 82.

Kenneth ‘Ken’ Beardwood. Joined the RN 1942. Served on board HMS Illustrious 1944-46 as a Seaman and a member of the association (Southern branch). March 18.

Henry ‘Harry’ Benson. Served in HMS Illustrious 1943-44 as a Midshipman, past member of the association. April 20. Aged 89.

Marjorie McElhiney. Member HMS Illustrious Association. April 4.

Lady Frederica Rozelle Ridgway Pierrepont, Wren Stoker. Joined the Wrens 1943 and was soon appointed stoker on a tug boat carrying men and signals round Combined Ops bases in the Portsmouth Command. On leaving the Wrens she became a deck hand on a 100-ton Bermudan cutter. She devoted her life to the sea, writing books about her war service, as a single-handed yachtswoman, and as the founder of a one-woman mission to take East End boys in care sailing in the London docks. June 22. Aged 89.

Frank Dyer AB. Served in HM submarines Seascout and Talent. Submariners Association. June 14. Aged 79.

Anthony Parkinson CPO OEMN. Served in HM submarines Onyx and Rorqual. Submariners Association. June 24. Aged 69.

John David ‘George’ Heslop CPO Medic/Radiographer. Served on board HMS Bulwark in the 70s. April 9. Aged 59.

Roy Morris ‘Ginger’ Waldram Officers’ Steward. Served HMS Reward and Mull of Galloway. April 29. Aged 81.

Wallace ‘Wally’ Stacey. Boy Seaman on board HMS Morecambe Bay (Korea) and member of the association. June.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Geoff Davies Act/CA SBPO(O). Served 1938-50 HMS Drake, RN Hospitals Plymouth, Vasa, Kilmalcolm, AMC Canton, Fishguard and Yeovilton LST 163 (evacuation) and Trincomalee. Founder member City of Inverness RNA. June 11. Aged 95.

Harry Barrett RM. Served 1939-48 HMS Ceres and Spartan. Norwich RNA. June 26. Aged 95.

ASSOCIATION OF ROYAL NAVY OFFICERS AND RNO

Rear Adm Charles B Williams CB OBE. HMS Sultan, Neptune, London, Nigeria, Ceres, Cochrane, Cumberland Hornet, Siskin, Triumph, President, Stadacona, MOD DNOT and Victory (Naval Base). June 11. Aged 90.

Cdr Christopher J Edwards. HMS

Defiance, Tiger, Tyne, Jaguar, Terror, Dolphin, Teredo, President, Tabard, Forth, Swiftsure, Gannet and MOD DG Ships. June 7. Aged 96.

Lt Cdr Anthony J ‘Tony’ Ellis. HMS Glamorgan, Ark Royal, Newcastle, Osprey, Heron, MOD Dir General Naval Personal Services. June 8. Aged 68.

Lt Cdr David J Hayes. HMS Heron, Cochrane, INM, RNH Haslar, NP 1032, Medical DG Staff, FOF3 Staff and 2SL/ CINCNAVHOME Staff. June 20. Aged 65.

Lt Cdr Peter H Lewis. HMS Seahawk, Terror, Mercury and Victory (Naval Base). May 1. Aged 86.

Lt Cdr Gerald F B Seedhouse. HMS Terror, St Vincent, President, Pembroke, Woodbridge Haven, Cleopatra, Corunna, Cochrane, Terror and DNR. June.

Lt Cdr Roy Crawley. HMS Tyne, Tiger, Cumberland, Cochrane, Delight, Indefatigable, DG Dockyard and MOD DG Ships. June 19.

Lt Cdr Kenneth E Williams. HMS Heron, Victory, Tyne, Defiance, Eagle, Vernon, Dampier, Afrikander, Daedalus and NATO. June 25.

Major Lennox S Whitworth. HMS President, Drake, Fearless, HQ 3 Cdo, 42 Cdo, JWE, RM Eastney, Chatham and Plymouth, NCO School RM and Cdo School RM. May 11.

Lt Len Carter. HMS Osprey, Simbang and RM Concor. June 1. Aged 89.

Lt Peter Borrow RNVR. HMS Coreopsis, LSE52. June 14. Aged 93.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION

Peter B Woods Tel. Served 1946-47 in HMS Orcadia and Rattlesnake. 2014.

David A Ralph L/Sea. Served 1951-56 in HMS Mariner and Pincher. January 2.

Lt Geoffrey S Knowles RNVR. Served 1945-46 in HMS Chameleon. June 17. Aged 95.

HMS NEWFOUNDLAND VETERANS

Thomas ‘Tom’ Roxby L/S Radar. Served 1941-46. HMS Newfoundland (43-46) also Maori, Penelope, Golden Hind and RAF Cresswell. June 18. Aged 93.

Peter ‘Pete’ Gale. Served 1955-95. HMS Newfoundland (1956-58) also Cumberland, Belfast, Bellerophon, Striker, Excellent, London, Ajax, Charybdis, Tamar, Nelson (shore base) Diligence, Dryad and RN DQs. June 12. Aged 78.

Brian Patrick AB. Served onboard HMS Newfoundland and HMS Ocean. 2014. Aged 76.

Thomas ‘Tom’ Gillies RM. Served on board 1956-57. May 22. Aged 76.

Terence ‘Terry’ Hull RM. Served on board HMS Newfoundland 1955-56, HMS Ceylon and 3 Cdo Bde Aged 79.

Ebola medals presented Nurses visit veterans

MEMBERS of the Armed Forces have been presented with medals for their efforts helping to tackle Ebola in West Africa.

Prime Minister David Cameron hosted military and civilian personnel at Downing Street to congratulate some of the 3,000 people who qualified for the medal, recognising their bravery and hard work in helping to stop the spread of Ebola.

This is the first time in recent history that a medal has been created to recognise those who have tackled a humanitarian crisis and is in recognition of the dangerous environment that workers were required to enter.

Medals have also been awarded

to NHS doctors and nurses, lab specialists and civil servants.

Military personnel at the reception received medals from Defence Secretary Michael Fallon, including intensive care nurse PONN Lizzie Meatyard.

She deployed to Sierra Leone on board RFA Argus where she worked in the Role Two hospital, acting as an ‘insurance policy’ for the other deploying personnel.

PO Meatyard said: “I’m extremely lucky to have had experience of land and sea during Op Gritrock.

“Having entered Sierra Leone, I augmented to 22 Field Hospital as a lead nurse.

“We set up the intensive care

unit within the Role Two medical facility in the ISAT, an essential medical facility required to provide an insurance policy in case of injury, non-Ebola related illness or trauma to UK entitled personnel.

“Once set up, it provided confidence to increase the number of UK personnel on the ground, enabling work to start at full capacity, supporting local infrastructure and building the Ebola Treatment Units.

“I later transferred to the medical facilities within RFA Argus in order to increase the Role Two capability on land whilst balancing the skill mix.”

DISABLED veterans at the Royal Star & Garter Home in Solihull welcomed student military nurses, nursing officers and a military chaplain from Birmingham City University to share their experiences.

The themed day, dubbed Exercise Nurses Endeavour, created a forum for students and residents to discuss their experiences in the Forces, which spanned more than 70 years.

Organised by Student Nursing Cohort 10/13 of the Defence School of Healthcare Education, the day started with military traditions including Colours, a parade and a military church

service, led by Padre Young.

The *Last Post* and *Reveille* were played, and the scene was set for sharing by young and old of their military experiences.

Students discussed operations in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as providing information on modern warships, whilst more residents shared stories about their time, or their partner’s time, in service. Lunch was a regimental-themed meal, providing an opportunity to reminiscence.

The day ended with a sing-along to favourite songs.

Holly-Jane Thurgood, a Royal Navy mental health nurse, co-ordinated the event.

Win tickets to Memphis

AUDIENCES are singing and dancing their way out of *Memphis*, the Olivier Award-winning musical that’s taken the West End by storm.

Voted by theatregoers as Best New Musical at the 2015 WhatsOnStage Awards, its blend of electrifying music and breathtaking energy has made it a must-see show.

Join radio DJ Huey Calhoun, who dreams of changing the world, and club singer Felicia Farrell, who’s ready for her big break, as they join forces to take the hip-shaking sounds of soul and rock ‘n’ roll from the clubs of Memphis to kids across America.

A funny, moving and exhilarating tale of fame, forbidden love and incredible music is inspired by the true events of 1950s Tennessee, where change was in the air and revolution was on the airwaves.

Multi-platinum selling recording artist and songwriter Matt Cardle, who won the seventh series of ITVs *X Factor*, and the Queen of British Soul Beverley Knight take the lead roles (pictured).

Memphis features original songs by Grammy winner and



Bon Jovi founder David Bryan, and a gripping story by Joe DiPietro.

And there are a pair of top-price tickets to be won by a *Navy News* reader.

All you have to do is answer this question: The American city of Memphis is named after the ancient capital of which Mediterranean country?

Send your answers to

memphis@navynews.co.uk or by post to ‘Memphis’, *Navy News*, Mail point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, Whale Island, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

Entries must be received by midday on August 21. Normal *Navy News* competition rules apply.

Additional terms and conditions: The prize consists of two top-price tickets to Memphis the Musical at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London. Tickets are valid on Monday-Thursday performances only from September 7 to October 15 2015.

Travel is not included in the prize. Winners are responsible for any extra charges incurred whilst redeeming the prize in addition to those covered by the prize funds above.

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Two more join the select band

TWO Sea Cadets have added their names to the select group who have achieved the Advanced Seamanship qualification.

POC Megan Roberts (*above*), of **Crewe** unit, and AC Rhiannon Deegan, of **Fleetwood**, gained the award as part of the national partnership between shipping giant Carnival Corporation – parent company of P&O Cruises and Cunard – and the SCC.

Last year only 14 cadets, out of a total of 14,000 across the UK, attained the level needed for the qualification, which tests Sea Cadets on their knowledge of rope work, rigging, splicing and whipping, canvas work and decorative rope work.

Megan, 17, joined as a 13-year-old because she was interested in a career with the Royal Navy, and she wanted to gain more confidence, qualifications and “have the chance of doing things that I wouldn’t have done if it wasn’t for cadets.”

She continued: “I have been lucky enough to go on many courses and trips with the Sea Cadets, and I have gained many friends all over the country.

“Through cadets I have gained a number of different qualifications like radio amateur licence, peer education, camp craft, cadet rowing instructor, intermediate cook/steward, kayaking and first aid. I am also a drummer in the unit’s band.”

Rhiannon, 14, who joined up when she was ten, said: “I joined Sea Cadets as it has become a family tradition, with both my dad and brother being in cadets and then the Merchant Navy.

“I wanted to be able to do activities which were challenging whilst also gaining additional qualifications which would help me in my future career.

“I have been able to complete 3rd Class PT, 3rd Class Cook Steward, Advanced Camping, Piping, Intermediate First Aid, Levels 1 and 2 Endorsement Slide in Seat Yoleing, Coxswain and also my Advanced Seamanship.

“I am looking forward to going away offshore on TS Royalist next year as I will be able to put into practise my newly acquired skills.

“I love the variety of courses which we are able to complete, giving us some much-needed life skills which we don’t learn at school.”

Sharp drill

REIGATE unit Drill and Piping teams were pleased with their performance at the national competition at HMS Raleigh.

After a tough competition the Armed Guard managed third place, the Guard Commander came fourth and the Piping Party came 11th out of around 400 units.

Rifle Drill is used in the Sea Cadets to teach cadets teamwork, commitment and self-discipline.

Inspection night for New Romney

THROUGHOUT the year New Romney and District unit, under the guidance of their commanders and trainers, work towards one particular night – Royal Naval Unit parade night, when they are inspected by a senior officer and all the year’s training, hard work and discipline is examined.

This year, in the presence of the Mayor of New Romney, the Mayor of Lydd, the Deputy Leader of Shepway District Council, Kent County Council Cllr Carole Waters, other local dignitaries, parents and families, the cadets

were inspected by Cdr John Greene RN, Area Officer for the South East of England.

He began by inspecting the guard of honour, then after the welcome Cdr Greene spoke to each cadet in turn, showing his interest in them, their progress and providing encouragement.

After the inspection, teams of cadets gave impressive displays, firstly a Gun Drill Display to music, and then carrying the parts of a field gun through a variety of obstacles.

Although no cadet was actually injured during this exercise, it also included a demonstration of dealing with field injuries and casualties.

The guns were finally assembled in very quick time and fired.

Before the evening ended with a buffet for the guests, Cdr Greene said how impressed he had been with the organisation of the unit and the quality and enthusiasm of the cadets, he also praised the officers of the unit and the civilian instructors for their hard work.



Josh trains with the Canadians

ROYAL Marines Cadet Josh Smith flew out to Nova Scotia to train alongside Canadian Sea Cadets.

Josh (14 – *pictured above*), of **Barnsley** unit, was selected from applicants around the UK to take part in the three-week annual summer camp at HMCS Arcadia in Cornwallis, where he will undertake sail training.

Before he flew out Josh said: “I still can’t believe that I am actually going to Canada with Sea Cadets. It’s a great opportunity.”

Josh, who joined as a Junior Cadet at **Neath** unit before transferring to Barnsley, recently moved across to the unit’s Royal Marines Cadet detachment.

Josh is an active member of the Corps and has attended courses around the UK.

He is the unit band’s Drum Major and recently took first place as best Drum Major in a British Youth Band Association band competition.

Glamorgan is remembered

PENARTH unit – TS Glamorgan – held their annual ‘Glamorgan Evening’ in remembrance of those who lost their lives serving aboard their namesake destroyer on June 12 1982 during the Falklands Conflict.

The event was attended by Heather Stevens, the High Sheriff of South Glamorgan, Penarth Town Mayor Cllr Rosemary Cook, Cdr Neil Pugh, the CO of HMS Cambria, Stuart Jones, Manager of Penarth Marina, representatives from Cardiff URNU and David Hayden, of Harris Pye Engineering.

After Colours cadets recalled the facts of the day when the County-class destroyer was hit by an Argentinian missile resulting in the deaths of 14 crew members.

After the recitation of a poem, written by a sailor from the ship, the youngest Junior Cadet laid a wreath, and a minute’s silence was observed.

Mr Hayden, representing the Institute of Marine Engineering Science and Technology, presented the unit with a donation of £400.

Keighley awards

CDR Charles Bagot-Jewitt travelled to **Keighley** unit to present awards to members of the Sea Cadet Corps and Royal Marines Detachment at their annual inspection.

Cdr Bagot-Jewitt congratulated the unit on progress achieved during the year, which has seen cadets join TS Jack Petchey for offshore cruises and the unit host the annual Trafalgar Day parade and service.

Birthday parties for Corps and units

THE SEA Cadet Corps has celebrated its 159th birthday – that’s 58,035 days of hoisting sails and having fun out on the water.

Units use this day to mark their own individual birthdays too, and have been finding lots of ways to celebrate.

Sea Cadets celebrated up and down the country, with sponsored rows, a rubber duck race, tombola, barbecues, boat rides, fancy dress, and lots of birthday cakes.

Here are a few highlights of what different units were up to...

Sandwell celebrated its 47th birthday by attempting to row the circumference of the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell, using rowing machines to tackle the 37km.

Evesham celebrated 25 years by cycling, rowing and walking the combined distance from Land’s End to John O’Groats, at six different locations around Evesham.

Around 50 determined cadets and staff took part in the ‘Run Row Ride’ event at sites across the town to complete the 874-mile route over eight hours.

Mildenhall and **Newmarket** units marked the Corps birthday in a very Sea Cadets way – with a training weekend at Lackford Lakes,

involving sailing, kayaking and rowing.

Torbay celebrated its 72nd birthday by having a week-long celebration, including a football match against the Army Cadets, a cake-making competition, various fundraising activities, and a beach party and barbecue for cadets, parents and friends of the unit.

For their 73rd birthday **St Helens** hosted an Armed Forces Day event with arts and craft stalls, face painting, dance groups and singers, all supporting and raising awareness for the Armed Forces community.

Morecambe and **Heysham** celebrated their 72nd birthday by holding a party during their parade night at Halton Training Camp.

Parents joined them for a ‘getting to know you’ evening with music, a barbecue and a cake-decorating competition.

Sea Cadets in **Lowestoft** acknowledged half-a-century of their unit with an open day for young people and parents to come along and see if they would like to join.

Leicester cadets attended the Birstall Village Festival, where the public were invited to guess the cooking time of the unit’s 78th birthday fruit cake and take part in a version of *Play Your Cards Right*.

Cadets from **Bridge of Don** will be celebrating their 16th birthday by hosting a

barbecue at Peterhead Marina on August 23, when they will stage a sailing display and offer boating experiences to visitors.

Dundonald marked the unit’s 30th birthday as part of their end of term barbecue for cadets, volunteers and supporters – and pride of place went to a birthday cake in the shape of a sailor’s cap.

Grimsby and **Cleethorpes** took a different approach by running an online memory book for their 73rd birthday, appealing to all former cadets or their relatives to share their stories and experiences.

These will be compiled into a presentation where former members will get the chance to see what Sea Cadets get up to today.

Ross-on-Wye and **Monmouth** celebrated their 14th birthday with an evening of fun on the water followed by the cutting of a birthday cake.

Bournemouth hosted a sports evening in the local park, when the unit also celebrated being their new look, thanks to a team of decorators.

Thurrock cadets celebrated the SCC 159th birthday with a cake made by unit vice chair Shelley Cameron – which was enjoyed even more as the unit had received a burgee at their recent Royal Naval Parade.

Island of adventures

ALMOST 30 Sea Scouts and Explorer Scouts from the Royal Navy Recognised **1st Watchet Sea Scout Group** spent a fun-packed week on the Channel Island of Jersey.

Activities during the break included camping, cooking on open fires, rock climbing, archery, rafting, kayaking (*pictured right*), sailing, power boating and blow carting (land yachting), as well as cycling from the ferry terminal to the camp site and then around the island to activities – on one occasion this included a round-island cycle of over 40 miles.

During their cycle round the island the scouts learnt much about the German Occupation, visiting the various German-made defences and underground tunnels and increasing their history knowledge, finding out about the events leading to the Liberation of the Island, 70 years ago this year.

The Explorer Scouts and older scouts also undertook two and three-day walking expeditions, camping at different sites around the coastal footpaths where they qualified for their Diamond and Platinum Chief Scout’s awards.

The nine leaders and instructors from 1st Watchet also assisted the local **St Ouens** Sea Scouts and another visiting Scout group to the island from Wotton-under-Edge in Gloucestershire with getting out on the water by running activities for them, whilst also undertaking joint activities back on the campsite,



including camp fires and games, competitions and a giant BBQ which was organised by some of the island Scout Leaders.

Sea Scout Millie Kemp was invested over 50ft up a rock face, making her Scout promise and law to the other scouts around her.

On two separate evenings the scouts and explorers went live on air, talking to listeners around the world on the island’s Youth Internet Radio station about their sea scouting experiences and the Royal Navy traditions they perform as RN Recognised Sea Scouts.

Megan Greenway undertook her Explorer Scout Promise and

Law live on air, being invested into the unit from the scouts whilst the radio presenter played the Sunset Ceremony live as the scouts lowered their defaced Red Ensign down the campsite mast and played the Still and Carry On, using a bosun’s call.

The expedition concluded with a closing ceremony at the campsite and presentations to the Scout Centre staff of a framed Admiralty chart of the island, signed by all the expedition members, with a photograph of them added.

Having been delayed on the return ferry crossing due to mechanical problems, the very tired scout group were still in

the scouting spirit of helping others and being prepared when they came across a large tree blown down across the road out of Yeovil in the early hours of Sunday morning.

Armed with axes and saws the scout group soon had the road cleared and opened to other motorists, allowing an ambulance on an emergency call to proceed without further delay.

Meanwhile back in Watchet harbour members of the scout troop who had not taken part in the expedition were able to learn sailing skills when they undertook a two-day Stage 2 RYA Youth Sailing course with some of the scout groups skills instructors.

Gosport support festival

GOSPORT unit was one of the maritime groups that helped make the first Gosport Marine Festival a success.

Hundreds of visitors took the chance to try water sports such as sailing and kayaking, and enjoy entertainment at the event, which was held at Haslar Marina and Gosport's waterfront.

Gosport Sea Cadets provided the training boats and qualified instructors.

Gosport Borough Council Cllr John Beavis, chairman of the organising committee for the festival, said: "It's just brilliant to see so many people enjoying themselves."

"The Gosport peninsula has so much to offer, and I've spoken to lots of people who have never been on a boat before but have tried out sailing or kayaking today."

"The look on the children's faces when they come back in is worth every bit of effort our team of volunteers has put in to bring this together."

Haslar Marina manager Ben Lippiett said: "It's been fabulous seeing so many young people getting the opportunity to get out on the water that may not otherwise have been able to do so."

"We couldn't be more thrilled with how it's gone today."

There was also a Float Show which included historic and performance vessels such as the Gosport-built Gypsy Moth IV, the yacht in which Sir Francis Chichester became the first man to sail solo around the world.

Lucy Gross, from the Gosport-based Association of Sail Training Organisations, said she was delighted that maritime groups, including Ocean Youth Trust South, Discovery Sailing Project and Rona Sailing Project, were there offering free taster sessions.

Cadets were out in force on both days of the HMS Sultan Summer Show to man a stand.

The weather was kind, and the cadets enjoyed showing other young people what the Corps had to offer – and helping to make personalised Father's Day cards.

They also demonstrated knot-tying and splicing, how to wear a lifejacket and buoyancy aid properly and the need for safety when afloat.

The unit recruited 11 people for Cadet entry (12 years and over) and several more for Junior Cadet entry (10 – 12).

Although space restrictions mean there is currently a waiting list for juniors, this is likely to change in the next 12 months and the unit will be able to accommodate many more Cadets of all ages.

Two honoured by Milford Haven

TWO members of Milford Haven unit have been honoured by the town council for their contributions to the community.

At a ceremony at the town hall, new Mayor Cllr Stephen Joseph presented awards to three locals who have given many years of their free time to helping local people.

Among them was Lieutenant (SCC) William Elliott RNR, who recently took over the role of Deputy Mayor.

Lt Elliott has been a Sea Cadet since the age of ten and until recently was Commanding



● A £3,000 cheque is handed over to Holyhead unit to buy a second Trinity 500 boat – the cadets are pictured with their current boat

Second boat offers new opportunities

A GROUP of local businesses, which work together as part of a Welsh government energy efficiency scheme, have joined forces to raise £3,000 to fund the purchase of a second new Trinity 500 rowing boat for Holyhead unit.

Willmott Dixon Energy Services manages the Arbed programme in North Wales, an initiative designed to address climate change and tackle fuel poverty, while creating local jobs and training opportunities.

In addition to delivering Arbed ('save' in Welsh) projects, businesses in the scheme also provide materials and volunteers, and raise funds for community-based initiatives.

Willmott Dixon Energy Services commercial manager Phil Young said: "We found out that the Sea Cadets in Holyhead were trying to raise funds to purchase a second rowing boat

so that they could hold races between different teams of young people as part of their training and team building activities."

"We discussed the possibility of providing a donation with Isle of Anglesey County Council and the project delivery partners within our supply chain and there was a unanimous agreement to support Holyhead Sea Cadets."

"The approach taken by Holyhead Sea Cadets in terms of instilling values such as teamwork, responsibility and citizenship in young people is something that I know appealed particularly to our team and the community, and we are pleased to have the opportunity to help them in their efforts."

CO Lt (SCC) Sue Williams said: "All the activities carried out are self-funded so to receive a kind and generous donation such as

this is just amazing for the unit and has saved us quite a few years of fundraising."

"Our cadets come from all over Anglesey to take part in different activities, being a part of the Corps gives them the confidence on the water and in building personal skills such as teamwork through healthy competition and at the same time having fun, this is a major part of what we do with the youngsters at the unit."

"Having the second boat in Holyhead will enable us to give more young people the opportunity to get out on the water and teach them skills that will hopefully help them in the future, and the experience will stay with them for life."

"A second Trinity 500 should also give the unit a chance to host the annual district rowing competition in the future."

Cardiff win back field gun honours

FOR the fifth successive year, one of the main attractions at the City of Cardiff National Armed Forces Day was the cadets' field gun competition between Cardiff unit and HMS Collingwood Volunteer Cadet Corps.

The competition, which commemorates the endeavour and fortitude of the Naval Brigades during the Boer Wars, is held over three rounds and requires crews of 19 cadets – boys and girls aged between 10 and 18 – to race against each other, manhandling and manoeuvring a 7pdr field gun and limber, weighing over 900lbs in total, over a distance of 170 yards, while carrying out drills.

Under the watchful eyes of CWEM(O) Mike Dixon (Battery Commander) and Cdr Peter Machin (Chief Judge), TS Cardiff gained spectacular revenge for last year by taking back the aggregate time, fastest time and fewest penalties trophies, although the latter was



● Cardiff unit cadets during a field gun run at the city's Armed Forces Day event

a close-run thing, Cardiff having only one penalty fewer overall than their Hampshire rivals.

Collingwood's FGO, WO1 Mike Fuller, was somewhat perplexed by the result, as his crew had run a (clean) time of 1m 8s at HMS Sultan only a few days earlier, but could not beat Cardiff's fastest time of 1m 16s (clean) on the day.

Nevertheless, both he and his opposite number, CMEM(M) John Callaghan, agreed that the competition had again been a great success and was enjoyed by spectators and participants alike, with the spirit, sportsmanship and camaraderie of both crews very evident.

Typically, Cardiff's First Aider, APO Craig David, was first on

the scene to tend a member of Collingwood's crew who was injured during the second run.

Cardiff's victorious captain, POC DT Rhys David, was presented with the three trophies by Cdr Michael Wood, Commanding Officer of HMS Somerset, Air Cdre Adrian Williams (AOC Wales) and Col Nick Beard (RFCA).

Record time at Achnacarry

SEA Cadets from across the Highlands met at Achnacarry to take part in the annual cadet version of the World War 2 Commando Speed March.

The original aspirant commandos had to run the seven miles to their camp at Achnacarry, while carrying a 36lb pack from Spean Bridge railway station in less than an hour.

Failure would result in them being sent home without undertaking the rest of the course.

The overall winner of the cadet version was AC Iain Cameron (Campbeltown) with a time of 57m 17s – a record for a cadet. Second place went to OC Jamie Sturrock from Inverness, almost two minutes behind.

In third place was Cadet First Class Josh Marlow of Oban, while Lochaber's first cadet home was Cadet First Class Connor Aitken.

Trophies and medals were presented by Lt Col Kevin Lane, of the Lochaber branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland, and Col Brian Hume of

the Army Cadet Force.

The event was organised by Lt Derrick Warner, who said: "We do this every year to remember the exploits of the original commandos who came from all over the country to train in Lochaber."

"Their contribution to fighting the Nazi threat is inestimable and many of them did not return home. We also use this as an opportunity to get cadets from all the forces together to compete in friendly competition."

"We've had tremendous support from Donald Cameron of Lochail and his staff for letting us use Achnacarry."

"The Royal British Legion Scotland and the Commando Veterans Association have also been fantastic in providing us with a new trophy this year."

The day was particularly poignant for two Lochaber cadets – Connor and Aaron Aitken's great grandfather completed his training at Achnacarry.

Long wait over for Lochaber

SIXTY-THREE years is a long time to wait for something really special.

But then, just when you thought it wasn't going to happen, it does – twice over, as was the case with Lochaber unit.

Firstly, Donald Cameron of Lochail, Lord-Lieutenant of Inverness, appointed LC Hannah Calder as his Cadet for the coming year at an investiture before an invited audience of VIPs, parents and shipmates.

Not only is Hannah a very experienced and highly qualified Sea Cadet, but she is also a gold medal-winning Gaelic singer.

Unit CO Lt (SCC) Derrick Warner RNR said: "We're so proud of Hannah. As far as we can tell, she's the first Lord-Lieutenant's Cadet the unit has ever had in its 63-year history."

Also present at the celebration was Capt Peter Adams RN, Northern Area Officer, who had another surprise for the unit.

He was able to reveal that, following the unit's recent review, it had been recommended for the award of an Efficiency Burgee – again the first in the unit's history.

Capt Adams said: "I know that the small team in Fort William applies a huge amount of effort, and that the cadets are a loyal, enthusiastic and have-a-go bunch."

"This award welcomes the Lochaber unit to the top ranks of the Northern Area, where it rightly belongs."

Top volunteer

AN adult volunteer with Ellesmere Port unit has been honoured by the Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire at the annual presentation of his awards.

CPO (SCC) Michael Farley was awarded the Lord-Lieutenant's Certificate of Merit, recognised as a laudatory honour throughout the forces.

The presentation was made by Lord Lieutenant David Briggs at a ceremony at Chester Cathedral.

CPO Farley has been a part of the Sea Cadets for nearly 15 years, during which time he has become a highly qualified powerboat and sailing instructor.

Every summer he also volunteers to help with the Cheshire Army Cadet camp, acting as Boats Officer.

"I really appreciate this recognition of my service and hard work over the past years," he said.

"I thoroughly enjoy making a difference to young people's lives and giving back to my local community."

High standard

A MEMBER of St Austell unit has won a national award.

LC Kieran Stephen received the Annual Award from the Institute of Seamanship for his high standards and enthusiasm on his Advanced Seamanship Course.

LC Stephen was shocked by the presentation and said: "It was an honour to be recognised for something I enjoy doing."

CO Sub Lt (SCC) Benjamin Nash RNR said: "This was a surprise to us all."

"He was nominated by the Director of Lifelong Learning, Capt Mark Windsor, through the HQ Staff Officer (Seamanship) for his conduct and ability during his 1st Class course back in October 2014."

"LC Stephen shows a great level of enthusiasm and dedication to this subject and thoroughly deserves this national award."

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The big gun theory

DR ROGER Parkinson did his PhD at Exeter on the Naval Defence Act of 1889 and late-19th-Century Naval policy.

His thesis and the resulting book *The Late Victorian Navy* was not without its problems, as reviewers pointed out, writes Prof Eric Grove.

Its reception was not quite so favourable as implied by comments on the dust jacket of his new book, which takes the story forward to the Dreadnought era and is a study of how 'all big gun' capital ships grew out of the 'pre-dreadnought' era and how the new ships were adopted by the world's major navies.

Although the emphasis in *Dreadnought: The Ship that Changed the World* (I B Tauris, £19.99 ISBN 978-17807-68267) is on Anglo-German competition, the author does look at the dreadnought programmes of other navies. As Dr Michael Duffy says on the cover, this usefully places HMS Dreadnought in a wider context.

The early part of the book, which reflects the author's doctoral research, is an interesting and useful discussion. His detailed analysis of – and emphasis on – the improvements in steel which lay at the heart of late-19th-Century developments is especially useful, as is his pointing out that the concept of the 'battle-cruiser' went back to the 'first class cruisers' of the 1890s. He is right to emphasise Admiral Samuel Long's



● *HMS Dreadnought leads the 1st Battle Squadron in Alma Burton Cull's 1911 painting*

Courtesy of Capt Rick Cosby/Maritime Prints, www.maritimeprints.com

THE GROVE REVIEW

contemporary comments on the subject. It is indeed a tragedy that this innovative officer's life was cut prematurely short.

Despite the strengths of many of his arguments, there is a major flaw even in this earlier discussion. I am not sure that the author really understands the nature of gunnery of the period. He over emphasises the importance of the 'main' armament of big guns carried in the warships of the time. In fact, it was the more-rapid-firing medium armaments of the time which provided both battleships and first class cruisers with their main striking power in the close range combats of the time. He cannot quite bring himself to accept that, in terms of contemporary gunnery

technique, the small calibre 'main armaments' of the ships of the early German programmes made a great deal of sense, although they would soon be obsolete as a result of the British-led long-range gunnery revolution.

He also finds it hard to disabuse himself of the old legend that the problem with the later all-big-gun British battle-cruisers was thin hull armour.

At the time they were built, no amount of armour could protect against 12in guns and larger at 9,000 yards – the expected battle ranges. There is a great deal of emphasis on weak armour, although the author clearly states that it was poor ammunition handling that led to the catastrophic losses at Jutland

and the near loss of Seydlitz at Dogger Bank. He is right to point out that it was ammunition handling that was changed after that latter incident, not structure. He ought to have pointed out that similar measures were taken in HMS Lion (alone) before Jutland, which saved

Beatty's life.

A slightly odd feature of the book is that despite its title, a key point of its analysis is the way the 'revolutionary' HMS Dreadnought grew out of the so called 'pre-dreadnought' era.

Perhaps given its title, the use of this designation in the book is understandable, although, as the author indeed points out, it is very much an *ex post facto* term. No-one at the time knew they were building 'pre-dreadnoughts'.

Another definitional problem is that of 'super dreadnought' as a ship with super-firing gun turrets. This would have made the early American South Carolina and Michigan 'super dreadnoughts', which is hardly the case. 'Super dreadnoughts' were ships with larger than 12in guns. Therefore the only German ships that qualify are Baden and Bayern, not the earlier Friedrich Der Grosse and Kaiser classes were arguably Germany's first real 'dreadnoughts' given the weaknesses of the two previous classes.

The author creditably tries to set the political background to the naval developments. He is very good on the subject of the little-known, but important, Mediterranean agreement of 1887 between Britain, Italy and Austria. Later on, however he confuses the 'ententes' with alliances. He is in bad company there, notably that of the War Office and that disastrous Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey. Such analyses need to be balanced with, for example, those of Professor John Charmley in his book *Splendid Isolation*.

It is the discussion of German policy which is especially weak. The coverage of Kaiser Wilhelm and his foibles would have benefited greatly from a more modern biography than one written in the 1920s! There are considerably more modern sources.

This raises a more general problem: the end notes display a very limited set of sources with too many old works and reference books. In essence, this is a book that could have been written many years ago. Even the more recent sources are used rather uncritically. The alarmism of the British Naval Attachés in Germany is taken at more or less face value, although again it seems that the author understands elsewhere the true dynamics of German building.

This reflects a tendency of the book to repeat conflicting analyses – not least on the central issue of the correctness or otherwise of Fisher's Dreadnought policy –

rather than properly synthesise them.

The book concludes with a discussion of the war, notably the Battle of Jutland. More problems emerge here. Again the discussion is confused in places. At one point, it is implied that Scheer might have wanted to engage the whole Grand Fleet which is certainly not the case. Also it falls into the same old trap of moving straight from Jutland to unrestricted submarine warfare. There is nothing at all about the sortie of August 19, which, as one of Dr Parkinson's major sources, Professor Marder, makes clear, had far greater strategic effects than Jutland.

The author concludes with a brief discussion of the Washington Treaty which is overly pessimistic. He ought to have looked at the American reaction to being, as the USN thought, comprehensively outmanoeuvred, making the 'one power standard' mean continued British superiority.

All in all, this is a frustrating book whose strengths are balanced by its weaknesses. It needed rather more work from more recent secondary sources and original documents and even more originality of analysis. The latter is there, but remains rather 'uncooked'.

Dreadnought, The Ship that Changed the World is very accessible at £19.99. I wonder how many of its readers will treat its contents with the necessary reserve.

SPORT

WHILE the United States celebrated their women's football team's victory over Japan in the World Cup final, the roots of that success can be traced back to a small village north of Portsmouth and to the Naval Service.

Because the woman who masterminded the team's success was born and raised in Cowplain, and her Royal Marines father has a place of his own in the annals of the beautiful game.

Jill Ellis was appointed head coach of the US women's team in May 2014, though she had the role on an ad hoc basis before that and has experience of coaching at every level of the national team programme – she was an assistant on the 2008 and 2012 Olympic gold medal-winning squads.

She has overseen the development of youth football since 2011, and was a successful college-level player.

On taking up her appointment, Jill acknowledged the influence of her father, saying he had "ignited my passion for this game and inspired me to be a coach."

Born just weeks after England won the World Cup, Jill was immersed in a football environment from an early age.

Her father John had joined the Royal Marines at Deal in late 1958; on his third day he played his first game of football at the depot, and by the end of his first week he had played his first game for the Royal Navy, against an FA Amateur XI at Fratton Park.

Juggling training (and the ire of less-than-sympathetic instructors) with his burgeoning football career caused John some awkward moments, but he persevered, and the rewards soon followed.

He was a regular for the Corps, the Nore Command, the Royal Navy and the Combined Services football teams, and his love of the game continued after he joined 45 Commando in Malta in 1960.

At that time the British Armed

World Cup win built on Royal foundation

Forces were deployed to the far corners of the globe, and although National Service was ending, there were still professional-standard players throughout the RN, Army and RAF.

These Servicemen acted as football ambassadors on rocky, dusty pitches around the world, introducing or developing the game wherever ships visited or units were based.

And John played his part in that expansion.

In 1965 he became a 'clubs' or physical training instructor, drawing him into the field of training methodology, managing players and teaching sport.

"I personally, and thousands of players and coaches, have benefitted from the Royal Marines PT School instructional technique," John told *Navy News*.

"When qualifying as a PTI a very high emphasis is placed on Swedish-style PT, based on coordination, which is vital when teaching football technique and team and individual fitness."

Delivery was also vital – "the ability to get out in front of a squad and with your voice motivate and teach," added John.

"So many people around the world have asked me where I learnt to be an interesting/dynamic instructor – I have to thank the brilliant instructors I worked with and learnt from."



● *John Ellis, his wife Margaret and granddaughter Courtney celebrate the American women's World Cup victory over Japan at a party in The Villages in Florida*

Picture: Ron Pearce

Having drawn up a five-year blueprint for RM football, he suddenly found himself at the helm of the team – and his first year as coach was a great success.

"I learnt in the Royal Marines training system the importance of understanding progression," he said.

"Whether it be working with an individual or a team concept, I learnt the ability to evaluate potential and how to calculate risk."

"These were key factors when I decided to bring in young potential, and develop it to succeed in Corps football."

He added that he was also able

to adapt military principles to his sport coaching.

In 1967 he was invited to take on the role of head coach for the Royal Navy as well, and soon introduced a youth team.

Two years later he went to the Far East with 42 Cdo, where local associations recognised the value of British methods and British military teams played their part in the development of the sport.

It also opened John's mind to other approaches to the sport, including that of Communist-bloc countries whose coaches were also working in the Far East.

John was director of the first Football Association

license coaching course held in Singapore, and his involvement with the FA became even closer on his return to the UK, particularly at youth level.

"Jill was always around a military/football environment at this time," John recalled.

"At Portsmouth she would come to games at Pitt Street and play behind the goal area with other players' children."

"A team for girls was not an option in England, so she ran at Portsmouth Athletics Club."

By the late 1970s John – by then a Warrant Officer 1 – was contemplating a range of options for life after the Corps, including coaching at Spurs, and offers from Australia and the Middle East.

"I selected America because I could see the future growth and an energy and enthusiasm to be involved in soccer," he said.

"It was early days, and clubs had 200 players. Today those clubs have 4,000 to 10,000 players..."

The family moved, and John set up Soccer Academy Inc to train coaches and initiate football programmes.

"The whole teaching philosophy is founded on what I learnt in the Royal Marines, but directed towards sport," he said.

His daughter had already achieved success as a college player, but she was also keen to follow in her father's footsteps.



● *Women's World Cup-winning coach Jill Ellis*

Picture: US Soccer

"Jill came to work in Soccer Academy, and it was within this environment she learnt to work with all age groups," said John.

"Jill has been educated in modern methods of coaching, team management, tactics, player selection and development."

"She is recognised as a dynamic presenter with a sensitivity to get players to succeed – and the foundations of her training are thanks to Her Majesty's Royal Marines' physical training philosophy."

John's development as a coach also continued; most countries design courses for over-12s, but John learned the importance of working with players from the age of five, coaching out bad technical habits that tend to return in the heat of a game.

By 1999 John had been appointed assistant coach to the US Women's team, helping them to success in tournaments around the world, including runners-up spot at the Sydney Olympics.

John retired as president of Soccer Academy Inc in 2006, moving to Orlando with his wife Margaret. His place at the head of the organisation was taken by his son Paul, another former Royal Marine, who is also a high-level football coach.

With thanks to the RMFA website www.royalmarinesfootball.co.uk

Match too far for RNVA men

THE revitalised Royal Navy Mens' Volleyball team took second spot at the Crown Services tournament.

It's a great achievement as the RNVA struggled to get a side together in previous years.

Ahead of the contest in Guildford, which sees the RN compete against the Army, RAF and teams from the police, fire and prison services, the RN finished runners-up at the Cardiff Open, toured Australia and won the Exeter Challenge tournament.

First up for the Navy Blues, fielding two new players, Lt Mike St Pierre (on exchange from the Canadian Navy) and Mid Callum Moir (BRNC), was the Prison Service. The RN soon found their stride and clinically despatched the opposition with a 2-0 victory in the best of a three-set pool match.

The impressive form continued with the Fire Service up next and an exceptionally well-drilled RN team extinguished them with an impressive display of disciplined defence coupled with the power of the two middle hitters, LStd Jimi Nadavo and AB MJ Masi.

The final game of the first day was against the Army, a team the RN men had not beaten for over four years.

Despite dropping their first set of the tournament the Navy battled through to a 2-1 win with Lt St Pierre continuing to

impress with his all-round game.

Day two saw the RN take on the police, who went 19-9 up at the end of the second set.

Some inspired substitutions, including Mid Jonny Childs (Bristol URNU) and LAET Tex Marshall, saw the RN end the match 2-1 victors and secure their spot in the final.

The last pool game was against the RAF, who were also in the final.

The RN ran out 2-0 winners to top the table ahead of the final. Eager for revenge, the RAF came out fighting and from the start had managed to shut down the RN's impressive hitting.

On this occasion the final proved to be a match too far for the RN and the RAF lifted the trophy with a 2-0 victory.

Men's coach Lt Cdr Colin Rex said "The progress made by the whole squad over the last two years has been incredible and is down to the players' drive and determination to improve and meet the challenges they were set at the start of this rebuilding process.

"Whilst it was one match too far at this tournament, the emphasis now is to maintain and improve the standard we have reached whilst developing real depth."

Any players interested in becoming part of the RNVA should contact Lt Daniel Bonner at Daniel.bonner970@mod.uk

Right approach from airmen



● WO Julie Palmer escapes the bracken

NAVAL Air took the honours at the 2015 RN Golf Championships – thanks to AB Ryan Moore.

Moore went into the final day with a nine-shot lead and finished the contest victor by three shots.

Around 60 golfers took part in six competitions held over five days at the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club in East Sussex.

The two team events attracted the largest number, with Naval Air, captained by Cdr Mark Selway, proving to be the team to beat.

The NA contingent won all four of their match-play games and also won the team strokeplay event, using just 1,357 shots from their six lowest players of eight in the first three rounds. The Royal Marines were runners up.

Those who failed to make the cut for the

individual strokeplay event went on to play in a greensomes competition on Royal Ashdown's West Course with WO Bob Mitchell and LH Gary Keene coming out the victors.

For the women, Lt Cdr Lauren Hulston (829 NAS) retained the title for the third consecutive year.

Musn Sophie Perriam (HMS Raleigh) walked away as runner up and the overall Nett Winner.

Next year's championships will be held in June in the Northern Region.

A DIN will be released early in 2016 with full details but in the meantime anyone interested in finding out more information about Navy golf, please contact the Sports Development Officer, Ms Debra Vout, via email: navygolf@mod.uk or telephone 02392 573063 (9380 28063).



● AET Rob McGregor of CHF in action in the pole vault; Mne Adam Peacock finishes the 1,500m; NA(AH) Dale Willis in the 400m

Hitting the road

SAILORS from HMS Raleigh were among a team of runners from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who took to the road to race against some of the UK's top runners.

Lt Linda Lawrence, LPT Sarah Rushton and recruit Connor Whiting were among 12,000 runners who took part in the Bristol 10km, a RunBritain Grand Prix event.

The Royal Navy women put forward a strong team of four, varying from track athletes to marathon runners.

Lt Lawrence came 10th in the veterans' category and took the RN title in 40min 29sec.

In the men's event the first home was Adam Peacock of RM Stonehouse, who was impressively 55th in 33min

39sec. He was followed by Andy Stay, CTCRM Lympstone, 90 seconds later.

Lt Cdr Tony Dunn of HMS Drake won the male 50 category in 35min 16sec, earning £100.

Connor Whiting, Andy Lavelle, RM Stonehouse, and Josh Owen completed the Royal Navy team.

The RN/RM road running team are competing in many events across the south of the country throughout the year and are always on the look out for new talent.

Coaching is available and anyone interested in athletics should contact Lt Neal Edwards, email 3CDOX-30CDOIX BASE 2IC or for road running C/Sgt Pete Belcher, email NAVY TRG CTCRM-SW CISTC SACI.

Sport on the up

UNITED Services (Portsmouth) Netball Club took part in a mixed tournament to raise awareness of the sport.

The club put two sides into the event at Brune Park School, Gosport.

The club has three teams currently entered in the Gosport and Fareham Netball Association (GFNA) League.

The mixed tournament was run by the GFNA to encourage new players into the sport.

Representing the Armed Forces in United Services were: MA Santana Graham, LET Romaine James, ET(ME) Jobb

Dallas, Lt Helen Oliphant, PTI Dan Turner, Cpl Andrene Sutherland and Sgt Sami Raloka. The other players were civilian and MOD employees.

The teams were coached by Lt Cdr Linda Cairney (also the RN Netball Association coach) and LWtr Eloise Smith.

United Services did not win (the two teams at the top of the GFNA league were unsurprisingly in the final) but the day was a great success.

There are now plans to form a male Royal Navy team to take on the Guernsey Men's team later this year.

Storming start

RIDERS from the Royal Navy got off to a great start to the cycling season with CPOET Andy Horsburgh placed in the top ten veterans at the National Scottish Downhill Series.

C/Sgt Sam Shields did equally well at the British Nationals where, mid-season, he is sixth overall in the veterans' category and tenth overall in the Combined Services.

Cpl John Bennet and Mne

Jamie Clowes represented the Royal Navy Royal Marines Cycling Association Downhill Team at the South West Series.

CPOET Horsburgh and C/Sgt Shields also instructed in Morocco for the Paras as mountain bike instructors which has excellent training at altitude for their future races.

The team hope to finish the season with the Inter-Service contest in North Wales.

Double delight for fastest man in RN

IT PROVED fourth time lucky for Royal Navy sprinter AB Olusoji Fasuba as he won the sprint double at the Inter-Service Athletics Championships.

The logistician with 30 Cdo, who finished runner up for three previous years, nursed his enduring knee injury to take the 100m in a time of 10.60sec and the 200m in 21.89sec.

The team of 16 men and eight women took on the Army and RAF at Aldershot with LET(ME) Daryn Jackson (HMS Ocean) taking bronze in the 100m and missing out on the medals in a photo finish in the 200m.

NA(AH) Dale Willis (RNAS Culdrose) was ecstatic with his 400m performance, although just pipped at the line for the win; his compensation was a superb personal best time of 47.97sec and just reward for his commitment to training and racing programmes.

Mne Adam Peacock (30 Cdo) had been improving at all distances from 800m upwards through the season.

His fast finish saw his 4min 23.46secs take silver in the 1,500m, in a race that became an 800m 'burn up' after a notoriously slow start.

Mne Rich Reeks (CLR) nursed an injured ankle to third place in the high jump with 1.95m, although the injury constrained the decathlete's potential medal-winning performances in other events.

PO Andy Dawkins (HMS Neptune) returned to Inter-Service competition after two years away at sea to finish third in the hammer with 38.70m.



● Mne Rich Reeks took third place in the high jump competition

Pictures: Anne Yates

The men's 4x100 team had high hopes of repeating last year's unprecedented victory, but were denied through an injury sustained whilst contesting the lead.

The women's medal haul was led by LStd Anna Waldron (HMS Bulwark) with second and third places in the shot (11.16m) and javelin (27.96m) respectively, the former was achieved after travel delays saw her jump out of a car for her opening and best throw.

PO Liz Edwards (HMS Ocean) repeated her previous

hammer wins with a throw of 33.51m.

LPT Reg Cawley (HMS Collingwood) ran 13.72sec to win bronze in the 100m and OC Rebecca Carman (BRNC) won the same in the high jump (1.40m) and narrowly missed a medal in the long jump and 200m.

OC Hanna Rabuzin (BRNC) is noted for her prowess in American Football and now also for her commitment to the team ethos as she completed five field events.

Arguably, the most pleasing result of the day came in the women's 100m hurdles. AB Holly Greenaway (HMS Collingwood) had already committed to cover three other events, including the 400m hurdles.

Her success in winning an unexpected, but well deserved bronze in 20.35sec, was universally welcomed by all team members and just reward for the moral courage and commitment displayed.

She won gold to achieve the biggest smile of the day.



● LAET Ben Taylor on the charge against the Combined Australian Services; The GB team in action against Queensland Combined University

Victory would have been icing on cake

IT WAS last-minute heartbreak for the GB Armed Forces Rugby League team – featuring a number of Royal Navy personnel – during their tour of Australia, writes Dan Abrahams.

Their main match against Combined Australian Services saw them lose 26-24 after a late penalty. They had led for the majority of the game.

To compound the harshness of the final outcome was the missed penalty decision after team captain Cpl James Hutchinson was hit by a two-on-one tackle just outside the Armed Forces goal area, halting GB momentum and pinning them back, as the clock ticked by.

CPO Mark Robinson said: "I thought after our start 'this is too easy', we got on the front foot early, but then that bounce of the ball, after we'd sent up a big bomb, that sent us the wrong way and they got a huge lift.

"The main focus of why we were here was to beat the Aussies in their back yard, it's difficult not to let it get you down, but you just have to keep thinking about what has happened for us this trip, the things we have done: trained with the Brisbane Broncos, played at Suncorp... these are things you can tell the kids in future years.

"For me I am 32, so this is probably my last tilt, I wanted the icing on the cake, it could have made it perfect, but at least I have had the cake."

Seemingly at home in the cathedral of the Suncorp, great early pressure from James Young at stand off and Tom Wilkinson at loose forward helped push the Australians back to their ten-metre line.

After just four minutes captain James Hutchinson found Vuli Viekune outside and the Army Sapper cut inside from the left touchline to score from 20 metres, which Si Wray converted.

Jordan Andrade made his arrival – replacing for Ben Taylor – known with a bustling run. This was followed by a similar run from Biunimasi, and the GB body language altered going into the break at 16-16.

Five minutes after the break GB were behind for the first time after a mix up collecting a catch saw the hosts gain a second set of six and with their final attack Biunimasi allowed himself to be pushed away too easily for Simington to score.

Sparkled by falling behind GB broke through with Hankinson being held up on the line, then a slip by Davies on the Australian try line saw



● CPO Kev Botwood and AB Ryan Matthews join in the celebrations as the GB team ease into a lead over the Combined Australian Services

the move stutter, his pass inside got the move going again and a clever kick from Dunn saw further pressure, but the move came to nothing.

Queeley then got in on the well-placed kicks act, with Wray putting in a thumping tackle on the clearing Australian player, while another good kick through, this time from Young, won another set of six and the Lions roared loudest as Howley burst through to score with 16 minutes to go. Wray converted to make it 22-22.

A tough decision then went against the tourists, when Hutchinson was hit by two men on his ten-metre line, but no penalty was awarded.

Further good work by Young, who had placed his kicks superbly throughout, forced a penalty which Wray took to gain the lead with ten minutes remaining.

In the dying minutes a knock-on saw GB back on their try line and, following a scrum on the ten-metre line, Simington ran over to dash GB hopes and win the game.

The tourists also played a Queensland Combined University side but lost 22-18.

During their tour the squad took part in a series of community and memorial events in Ipswich, Brisbane. Linking up with staff from neighbouring Gallipoli Army Barracks, the tourists showed their respects to the fallen at the RAAF Amberley memorial before placing a wreath. RFL Programmes Director Julia Lee also laid a wreath.

Maj Dave Groce RLC, tour manager for GB Armed Forces, said: "In the centennial year of the Battle of Gallipoli, in which 10,000 Australian and New Zealand troops and 7,000 Turkish soldiers lost their lives, we felt it was important that we remembered the sacrifices made by our forefathers. The act of remembrance at RAAF Amberley allowed us to pay our respects and reflect on a battle that had such a significant impact on the nation."

Naval personnel in the squad were: CPO Kev Botwood (HMS Queen Elizabeth), Logs S Buinimasi (RM Stonehouse), Mne Tom Loxam (45 Cdo), AB Ryan Matthews (HMS Penzance), LAET Mark Robinson (RAF Waddington), LAET Ben Taylor (HMS Heron) and AET Tommy Wilkinson (HMS Seahawk).



● RMRL captain sgt Carl Gilson receiving the Courage Cup from Col Oliver

Marines down RAF to keep Courage Cup

THE Royal Marines Rugby League team retained the Courage Cup after seeing off the RAF 56-24.

Mne Calan Toogood put in an outstanding performance, while Mne Rich Cadywould scored a hat-trick of tries.

In their first fixture of the year, the RMRL travelled to Wigan to remember two RM players, Liam 'Elmsy' Elms and Steven 'Darbs' Darbyshire, both of whom died in Afghanistan.

The game itself against Wigan St Patricks was a hard-fought affair with the fledgling RM squad losing 20-16.

Sgt Carl Gilson and Mne 'Sharpie' Sharp put in outstanding performances, and Mne Kaye was nominated man of the match by the WSP coach.

The annual contest between the RM and the Royal Artillery saw the Royals win back the Sebastopol Cup with a 44-24 victory.

The RMRL Corps Championships at the Wigan Bowl got off to a bad start as the match official was unable to attend, 30 Commando were stuck in traffic and CTCRM and CLR were both unable to raise enough players.

WO2 Paul 'Nobby' Clarke stepped in to be the official and the first match got under way between 40 Commando and 45 Commando.

Both units were fully committed, with 45 Cdo emerging victors, and the game ended with some impressive bumps, bruises and scratches on both sides.

Next up was 42 Cdo versus CTCRM/CLR, with the former emerging winners 22-14.

Having completed the exhaustive drive from Plymouth, 30 Cdo arrived to take on 40 Cdo, who scored 30 points before their opponents hit back with a mere four points.

30 Cdo then took on CTCRM/CLR, who played with great structure to win the match 26-14.

Next up was 45 Cdo vs 42 Cdo, with the former running out worthy winners 12-4.

The next match saw 40 Cdo score 28 unanswered points against CTCRM/CLR before the final match of the day saw 45 Cdo beat 30 Cdo 48-6.

The following day and the final between 42 Cdo and 45 Cdo.

The hard-fought contest saw the latter run out eventual winners, securing the title for the next year.

Rivalries return

SAILORS are preparing for the International Defence Rugby Competition 2015 this October.

IDRC 2015 will pit 12 international teams of battle-hardened soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines against each other to determine the greatest Armed Forces rugby team on the planet.

Lt Col Trevor Cottey, IDRC tournament director, said how much the teams from the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force were looking forward to hosting the teams from, among others, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada and Japan.

"All the teams are raring to go for this competition.

"The RAF are the current Inter-Service champions, the Army are reigning IDRC champions and the Navy will want to bounce straight back from this year's Army v Navy game.

"The traditional Inter-Service rivalries will be boosted a thousand-fold by the global nature of the competition as we welcome the best defence teams in the world for three weeks of international rugby."

Follow the action at www.idrc.org.uk or on Twitter @idrc2015.



● A traditional welcome for the GB team; The squad attended a remembrance service at the RAAF Amberley memorial

Pictures: Gordy Elias



Navy chukkaway victory over the Army

THE ROYAL Navy Polo team lost the annual Hackett Rundle Cup against the Army by a mere half point.

The Senior Service side, consisting of Cdre Adrian Aplin, Lt Cdr Steve Spiller, Lt Hiro Suzuki and L/Cpl Max Kamper, had a 1½ goal handicap advantage at the start of the game but went a half point down after the first chukka.

Four gruelling chukkas in front of a 5,000-plus crowd at

Tidworth Polo Club in Wiltshire, saw the RN team valiantly attempt to keep their lead.

Heading into final chukka the Navy were leading by 5½ goals to the Army's 5. But the dying minutes saw the Army score from a penalty to end the game victors by six points to 5½.

The sides were well matched during the fast and furious game, which took place in temperatures reaching the mid 20s.

Team captain Cdre Aplin said: "We gave it our all but it was not to be."

Club secretary Cdr Al Wilson said: "It was a hard-fought game and the Navy was the stronger team, but unfortunately it wasn't to be after the last-minute penalty."

For more information about RN Polo visit: <http://cspa.org.uk/navy-polo-association/#content>

Picture: CPOA(Phot) Rob Harding



● The RMRL squad celebrate retaining the Trafalgar Cup

Marines triumph

THE Royal Marines Rugby League side took the honours in the prestigious Trafalgar Cup against the Parachute Regiment.

The game at the AJ Bell Stadium in Salford, Manchester, saw Sgt John Coe go over the line in the first five minutes.

The Paras immediately hit back and, capitalising on some RM mistakes, took the score to 10-4 after 20 minutes.

This galvanised the Royals and the remainder of the half saw some very gritty and physical play.

Thanks to some inspired in-field kicking by stand-off Mne Rich Cadywoud, the Corps stretched the lead to 24-10, with tries by Tom Marchant, Rowan Griffith-Jones and John Coe.

The score at half time was 24-14.

The second half began as the first had finished, with the Paras scoring an early try to put the

pressure on the Royals.

The match continued at a relentless pace and both sides produced Rugby League worthy of a Super League ground.

Veteran player Steve Riley touched down for the Corps half-way through the second half, meaning the Paras now had to score three times to at least level the score.

Not to be beaten easily though, the Paras responded with some very strong forward running and some creative back play.

However, a final two-pointer from Cadywoud sealed victory on the final whistle, with the score 36-26.

Cpl Mark Sharp was awarded man of the match for his untiring effort at prop, which provided the platform for the Corps to launch their scoring attacks.

■ GB Armed Forces Rugby League tour of Australia – see page 43

A ROYAL Navy Officer Cadet at Britannia Royal Naval College earned a place in the record books after rowing 'from the earth's surface to the edge of space'.

OC Charlotte Marshall rowed 100,000 metres on a Concept2 rowing machine in a time of seven hours, 54 minutes and 25 seconds.

Photographic evidence of the rowing machine's monitor was sent to Concept2 for official verification. They confirmed Charlotte had broken the previous world record of seven hours, 57 minutes and 43 seconds, for the female 20-29 age-group, and named her the new world record holder.

The 23-year-old from Lincoln joined the Royal Navy in November 2014 and was coming towards the end of her 30-week initial Naval training course for officers when she embarked on her epic row.

The challenge took place in the gym at BRNC, where Charlotte was supported by her fellow cadet, OC George Lunn, acting as the coxswain. He was charged with keeping her motivated and ensuring that she kept on target for the split times to beat the record.

Charlotte attended Caistor Grammar School and then studied at Oxford University, where she learnt to row and won the Women's Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race in 2012 as



● OC George Lunn encourages OC Charlotte Marshall towards her record-breaking effort at BRNC

Picture: Craig Keating

captain of the Osiris boat.

Charlotte said: "We came up with the idea as a personal challenge."

"George kept me going throughout, telling me how far I'd rowed in terms of the English Channel and Panama Canal, as well as providing a sense of perspective with

stories about overcoming adversity, such as Shackleton's Endurance expedition to the Antarctic.

"In the latter stages it turned into a mental battle. I was fighting every stroke to stay on the split."

"The back-up plan was to settle for the British record, but it's a great honour and I'm absolutely delighted to have broken both."

"I underestimated how much I would suffer with muscle pain and fatigue, so I couldn't have done it without George's input. I think this encapsulates what training at BRNC is all about. You don't know how far you can push yourself until you actually do it."

The challenge started at 2.02 pm and finished at 9.57 pm. Charlotte spent 57 minutes out of every hour rowing, taking a break for just three minutes to stretch, refuel and re-hydrate.

Charlotte and George were among the latest groups of cadets to celebrate their formal commissioning as Naval Officers during a parade attended by friends and families. They are due to remain at BRNC for Warfare Officer training before eventually specialising as pilots. Both will continue with sport during their careers and hope in the future to represent the Royal Navy.